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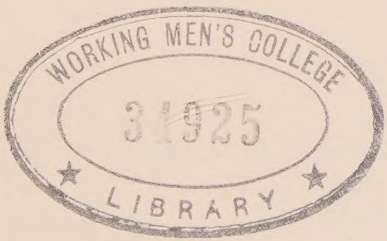
# SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL

## A POLICY FOR LABOUR

Edited for
THE EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE LABOUR PARTY
by
R. H. TAWNEY

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# SUMMARY OF LABOUR PARTY'S POLICY

## I

## THE GENERAL OBJECTIVE

THE Labour Party is convinced that the only policy which is at once educationally sound and suited to a democratic community is one under which primary education and secondary education are organised as two stages in a single and continuous process; secondary education being the education of the adolescent and primary education being education preparatory thereto. *Its objective, therefore, is both the improvement of primary education and the development of public secondary education to such a point that all normal children, irrespective of the income, class, or occupation of their parents, may be transferred at the age of eleven+ from the primary or preparatory school to one type or another of secondary school, and remain in the latter till sixteen.* It holds that all immediate reforms should be carried out with that general objective in view and in such a way as to contribute to its attainment. It recognises that the more secondary education is developed, the more essential will it be that there should be the widest possible variety of type among secondary schools. It therefore looks forward to the time when Central Schools and Junior Technical Schools will be transformed into one part *of a system of free and universal Secondary Education.*

The creation of such a system must, however, be a matter of time, and must depend largely upon local initiative. In order to prepare the way for it, Labour should throw its whole weight, nationally and locally, into securing the instalments of reform which are set out below.

## II

## THE REMOVAL OF FINANCIAL BARRIERS

At the present time large numbers of children are prevented from entering a secondary school at all by the poverty of their parents. In the year 1919-20 11,134 children in England and Wales were refused admission to secondary schools because there were no free places available for them, though they reached the intellectual standard required by the school authorities.[1] Of the small percentage of children who do pass from the primary to the secondary schools a large proportion leave at, or soon after, their fifteenth birthday because their parents cannot afford to keep them at school longer.

In order that the financial barriers which make secondary education inaccessible may be removed :—

(i) Fees at grant-aided secondary schools should be abolished by Local Education Authorities, either at one stroke (as at Bradford) or by increasing the number of free places from year to year, as is proposed by the County of Durham, until by 1924 all are free.

(ii) Pending the complete abolition of fees, the Board of Education should at once carry out the recommendation of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places to increase the percentage of free places in grant-aided secondary schools from twenty-five to forty per cent.

(iii) Local Education Authorities should revise their system of maintenance allowances with a view
  (*a*) To a large increase in their number.
  (*a*) To an increase in their value.
  (*c*) To grading them in such a way that there may be a progressive increase in their value from twelve to eighteen.
  (*d*) To taking immediately full advantage of the Board's Maintenance Allowance Regulations.

[1] Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places (Cmd. 968), 1920, App. I, Table D.

## III

## THE PROVISION OF ADEQUATE SECONDARY SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION

In the year 1919-20, in addition to the children excluded through lack of free places, 10,076 *children were refused admission* to secondary schools because there was not sufficient accommodation to receive them.[2] In order that this grave scandal may be remedied, Labour should press for the adoption of the following measures :—

(i) Each Local Education Authority should take as its immediate programme, to be carried out at the earliest possible date, the provision of secondary school places for not less than twenty per 1,000 of the population. This standard (which was recommended by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places) is, however, far behind that already obtaining in the more progressive States of America, and should be regarded as purely provisional. At the same time, therefore, Local Education Authorities should prepare an estimate of the number of secondary school places required in order to provide for twenty-five per cent., fifty per cent., and seventy-five per cent. of the children leaving the primary schools. On the basis of it a programme should be begun which will ensure that within ten years secondary school places are provided to accommodate not less than seventy-five per cent. of the children.

(ii) The carrying out of such a programme will obviously necessitate the erection of new schools. It is important that the planning of these schools should not be such as to perpetuate the existing vicious division between "elementary" and "secondary" education. They should be designed in such a way as to make it evident that primary and secondary education are successive

[2] *Ibid.*

stages in a single continuous system, and that the primary school is simply the preparatory school, from which, at the appropriate age, the majority of children will pass, as a matter of course, to the secondary school.

(iii) In the meantime, in order partially to meet the immediate shortage of secondary school places, this programme should be accompanied by the following transitional measures and, when necessary, by such a temporary modification of the Secondary School Regulations of the Board of Education as may permit of their being adopted :—

(*a*) The Preparatory Departments in grant-aided secondary schools should (as recommended by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places) be discontinued. These departments now contain some 26,000 fee-paying children, the majority under the age of ten. Their accommodation can be put to better use in providing school places for children of eleven and over.

(*b*) Central Schools and Junior Technical Schools are important, as representing a type of higher education designed to meet the needs of those children who progress most easily by means of a curriculum containing a considerable infusion of practical work appealing to their creative instincts. It ought to be recognised, however, that they are not a mere continuation of primary education, but part of the secondary system, and, wherever possible, they should be remodelled so as to become grant-earning intermediate or secondary schools.

(*c*) Such primary schools as are suitable should be converted to the same purpose, whenever the change can be carried out without undue pressure upon the primary school accommodation.

(*d*) In rural districts, where distance often makes the secondary school inaccessible to many children, the Local Education Authority should organise a motor transport service for the conveyance of children to and from school.

## IV

## THE REGRADING OF EDUCATION

The division of education into "elementary" and "secondary," as interpreted and organised hitherto, is educationally unsound and socially obnoxious. It results in (*a*) a grave waste of talent, (*b*) the exclusion from the secondary schools of children who ought to enter them, (c) the imposition on the primary schools of the task of educating children between twelve and fourteen, for which they may not be specially fitted, (*d*) waste and inefficiency arising from overlapping.

It should therefore be abolished, and in place of it schools should be graded as follows :—

(i) *Primary*, for all children up to eleven to twelve. Subdivided into—

(*a*) Nursery and Infant Schools for all children up to the age of seven.

(*b*) Preparatory schools, for all children between ages of seven and twelve.

(ii) *Secondary*, for boys and girls between the age of twelve and sixteen-eighteen.

(iii) *Higher*, providing education of a University type.

All normal children should pass from the primary to one type or other of secondary school at the age of eleven+ and should remain in it, with the aid of adequate maintenance allowances, to the age of sixteen.

## V

## THE TRANSFERENCE FROM THE PRIMARY TO THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

(1) Transference from the primary school to higher education should depend solely upon whether it is likely to be for the benefit of the children concerned.

(2) Transference should normally take place at the age of eleven to twelve, but there should be provision by which "late-developers" can pass to a secondary school up to the age of fourteen.

(3) As long as the number of school places is inadequate, competition for admission to the secondary school is inevitable. But examinations should be supplementary and subsidiary to the use of school records and of reports by teachers.

(4) The test of admission for children applying for free places and for fee-paying pupils should be the same. Nor should further intellectual tests be imposed as a condition of receiving a maintenance allowance. Labour should resist strongly the policy of admitting fee-paying pupils on easier terms than free-place pupils, and free-place pupils who do not receive a maintenance allowance on easier terms than those who do.

## VI

## THE SUBSTITUTES FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

(1) Part-time continued education between fourteen and sixteen, while an improvement on the present position, cannot be accepted as a substitute for the development of a system of secondary education. The policy on which Labour should insist is the development (as already proposed by certain authorities) of full-time secondary education—interpreted in such a way as to include a wider variety of curriculum than is normally the case at present—for boys and girls between twelve and sixteen. The continuation school should "continue"

secondary, not primary or preparatory, education, and its proper sphere is the provision of part-time education for those who leave the secondary school at sixteen.

(2) Central Schools of the type which is most common to-day, while possessing certain advantages, do not supply a satisfactory alternative to secondary education. In staffing and equipment they are normally part of the "elementary" system, and their curriculum is sometimes unduly and prematurely specialised. They ought to be reorganised in such a way as to become part of the secondary system.

(3) The Board of Education should hasten the conversion of such schools into secondary schools by (*a*) recognising as secondary schools all schools that provide a course of full-time instruction between eleven+ and sixteen years of age, (*b*) requiring that such schools shall comply in respect of staffing and equipment with the regulations for secondary schools, (*c*) paying grants on account of them on the secondary scale.

## VII

## THE NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE

If an intelligent public opinion is to be formed on educational questions, it is essential that full information with regard to the progress of education in the United Kingdom and in other countries should be made regularly and easily accessible. At the present time such information is provided only in a piecemeal and haphazard manner. Whereas the student of economic questions can find in official documents the data for an examination of foreign trade, unemployment, movements of wages, and similar questions, to obtain equally authoritative evidence about the educational situation is difficult or impossible. The result is that, when educational controversies arise, the community has not got before it the facts on which alone an intelligent judgment can be based.

In order that such facts may be available with regard to secondary education, it is suggested that the Board of Education should publish annually figures showing :—

(i) The number of children (*a*) leaving primary schools in the area of each authority, (*b*) passing from primary schools to grant-aided secondary schools, with and without free places, (*c*) passing to secondary schools from private schools.

(ii) The number of pupils per 1,000 of the population in grant-aided secondary schools in England and Wales, and in corresponding schools in Scotland, the principal European countries, and the U.S.A.

(iii) The number of children excluded from secondary schools in England and Wales (*a*) through lack of accommodation, (*b*) through lack of sufficient free places.

(iv) The school life and leaving age of pupils in grant-aided secondary schools, distinguishing between free-placers and fee-paying pupils.

(v) The expenditure of Local Education Authorities on (*a*) free places, (*b*) maintenance allowances.

(vi) The number of pupils (*a*) leaving grant-aided secondary schools, (*b*) passing from secondary schools to Universities.

Further, Labour members of Local Education Authorities should press them to publish corresponding figures with regard to their different areas.

## CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTORY

WHATEVER may be the fate of the Education Act of 1918, it has had one effect which will survive its suspension. It has compelled the nation to face the whole problem of secondary education, and to face it in its relation to other parts of the educational system. The creation of a structure of part-time education for young persons between fourteen and eighteen, the establishment of which was the most novel and most hotly contested part of the Act, has been, at least temporarily, postponed. But the problem of adolescent education, with which section 10 was concerned, has been, ever since 1902, in one form or another, the centre of educational discussion. It will not lose its prominence merely because the particular method of dealing with it which was proposed in 1918 has been for the time being abandoned. Industrial interests could scrap the work of Parliament, but not even the Federation of British Industries can abolish the children. In spite of the apostles of "economy," the perversity of human nature will continue to cause some 650,000 young persons every year to reach fourteen and to leave the primary schools with the inevitable regularity of a recurring decimal. As long as ninety per cent. of the 2,500,000 young persons between fourteen and eighteen are receiving no kind of education, the question which the Act tried to answer remains. Its answer has been negatived. It remains either to insist that it is the right answer, or to find a better one.

"Or to find a better one." For the Act of 1918, with all its advantages, had one defect. It did not really face the questions: What is the function of primary

education? What is the function of secondary education? What ought to be the relations between them? But, as half a century of bitter experience ought to have taught us, it is just these questions which are vital. Less than any other human activity can education be handled effectively if it is handled piecemeal. Neither primary, nor secondary, nor continued, nor—it may be added—university education can function unless their objects are clearly conceived and their relations determined upon some intelligible principle. And if the failure to bring into operation section 10 is used as an opportunity to reconsider the larger problems of post-primary education, with which the Act dealt, admittedly, by way of compromise, then that failure, discreditable though it is to our common sense and our humanity, may prove in the long run not to have been wholly a misfortune.

The truth is, the continuation schools were a makeshift—a makeshift which, while preferable to the existing neglect of boys and girls who have left the primary school, was not the solution which would have been chosen either by most educationalists or by the Labour movement, had their hands been free. Part-time continued education was to be welcomed as establishing some measure of educational supervision over the critical years of adolescence, and it is important that Local Education Authorities should use their powers under the Act of 1918 to obtain all the light that experiment can throw upon it. But the weakness of our present arrangements is a matter not merely of quantity, but, still more, of quality. It is not simply that the vast majority of children receive no further education beyond fourteen, but that, because there is no vital and systematic relation between primary and secondary education—because the crucial problem of so grading education that it may correspond with the natural development of children has never been seriously faced in England—the secondary schools are starved of able pupils, and the primary schools, which ought to be preparatory schools, are driven to undertake the work of

adolescent education for which they may not be specially suited. What is needed, in fact, is not merely an *extension* or *continuation* of education, but a *reclassification* or *regrading* of education. In the attempt to prevent the higher education of most children altogether, the opponents of the Act have raised the question whether, in the form proposed, the part-time schools of section 10 represent quite the form of higher education which we need most. Acting with the worst intentions, they have saved us from the blunder of merely tacking a system of continuation classes on to the present elementary schools. They have given us, in fact, an opportunity for second thoughts, and the proposals before some Local Education Authorities show that it is being taken. We ought to use it to reconsider the most vital and hitherto the most neglected question of educational policy, the establishment of a living and organic connection between primary and secondary education.

It is the purpose of this book to suggest the practical steps to which such a reconsideration would lead. There are aspects of education, and its most important aspects, which elude analysis, and which, because they are essentially individual, cannot usefully be discussed in terms of policy and organisation. "We do it wrong, being so majestical, To offer it the show of violence"—few persons can have felt the influence of a good school or a great teacher and then turned to read, say, a debate upon education in the House of Commons, without experiencing something of the sensation which these lines evoke. We do not forget the imponderables of personality and spirit and atmosphere; they are the root of the whole matter. But even education works within the limits set by a material scaffolding of policy, administrative organisation, and finance. It is with that scaffolding that this book is concerned.

Its proposals, at least in principle, are not novel. But in the last twenty years several causes have combined at once to strengthen the case for the reorganisation which we advocate and to increase its feasibility, and, if our

recommendations are disputed, few will deny the urgency of the problem with which they deal. Both in the criticisms passed upon the present system and in the proposals for improving it there are signs of a fundamental agreement which did not exist ten, or even five, years ago. In England it is not ungentlemanly to steal halfpennies from children, and industrial interests, it may be assumed, will oppose any reform which interferes with the supply of cheap juvenile labour. But among educationalists and teachers, economists and social workers, administrators and, not least, the parents themselves, there is not a wide diversity as to the main weaknesses of the existing arrangements or as to the principles upon which they should be reformed, provided that the difficulties of finance—cost to the taxpayer and cost to the parent—can be satisfactorily overcome.

Primary and secondary education have grown up in England as two separate systems, between which, since 1902, partly as a result of the Education Act of that year, partly through the development of the Free Place system, partly through the wise insistence of the Board of Education that intending teachers should spend four years in a secondary school, an increasing, if sadly inadequate, number of bridges have been cast. The time has now come for a radical reconstruction of the relations between them. "It may be hoped," writes Dr. Hendy, Director of Training in the University of Oxford, "that the old misleading parliamentary distinction between elementary and secondary may disappear, and that we may see a new grouping of schools on a genuinely educational basis, into primary, educating to the age of ten to eleven, and secondary, educating beyond that age."[1] That sentiment will be echoed by all serious reformers. What they would desire is that the wide gulf which still divides the two should be closed, that primary education should be so planned as to lead, in the case of all normal children, to one type or another of secondary education, that secondary education should

[1] "The Universities and the Training of Teachers. An Inaugural Lecture by F. J. R. Hendy.

begin at eleven+ and be built on the foundations of primary education, instead of side by side with it, and that part-time continued education should follow at least four years' full-time secondary education, instead of being offered, as the Act of 1918 proposed, as a substitute for it.

Continuation schools, Central schools, Junior Technical schools, or at any rate the last two, have a future before them if they are organised frankly as part of the secondary system. But, except in so far as that is the case, they are at best—what the able educationalists of *The Times* have described them—mere "transitional phenomena." At worst, we may add, they are one more blind alley from which a generation hence, after a heavy expenditure of money and effort diverted from more important educational tasks, we shall be obliged to return. We have half a century of experience of cheap substitutes. To invest in yet another of them, when the genuine article is obtainable, would be insanity. What we require is to recognise boldly that nothing less than general secondary education will either stand the criticism of the educationalists, or satisfy the demands of a working class that has tasted of the tree of knowledge and does not intend that its children should be fobbed off with the educational shoddy which was foisted upon itself. In place, in short, of "elementary" education for nine-tenths of the children and "secondary" education for the exceptionally fortunate or the exceptionally able, we need to envisage education as two stages in a single course which will embrace the whole development of childhood and adolescence up to sixteen, and obliterate the vulgar irrelevances of class inequality and economic pressure in a new educational synthesis.

It is not suggested, of course, that the practical application of such principles can be other than gradual. Educational reforms are limited—to mention no other conditions—by the supply of teachers and of school accommodation. Neither can be improvised. When we speak of "general secondary education" as the goal of

educational policy, we do not in the least ignore these well-worn truisms. If the direction is agreed upon, the precise speed at which different stages on the road are to be reached is a question which must be solved in the light of the varying circumstances of different authorities. All, we may take it, will begin by increasing the provision of secondary school accommodation sufficiently to make up the gross and admitted shortage which exists at present. All will reject the odious and short-sighted policy of making secondary education scarce and dear by raising fees. All will free it, as soon as practicable, in the schools provided by them, and will greatly develop their system of maintenance allowances. But naturally the scale on which they provide facilities will depend on the extent and growth of the local demand. In some places accommodation at the rate of fifteen to twenty per 1,000 will meet it for the time being; in others something more will be required almost immediately. In each case they will proceed, therefore, experimentally. What they will *not* do is to acquiesce—as in the past—in the idea that the normal and inevitable thing is for only a small fraction of the children leaving the primary schools to pass to any kind whatever of secondary school. They will accept, as the object to be aimed at, the establishment of a system under which the majority of children will receive a secondary education from eleven+ to sixteen, and will plan their immediate developments with a view to attaining it at the earliest moment that circumstances allow.

Such a policy is idealistic but it is not visionary. It is no part of the purpose of this book to attempt, even in outline, to summarise the recent history of secondary education in England. But it is permissible to emphasise that our proposals, so far from involving a leap in the dark, are the natural culmination of the main developments which have taken place in the world of public education during the last twenty years. The number both of pupils and school places in 1922 is, as we show below, all too small. But, inadequate as they are, they represent something like an educational revolution

compared with the almost complete absence of public provision which existed prior to 1902. When in 1895 the Royal Commission, of which Lord Bryce was chairman, investigated secondary education, it found that the pupils in secondary schools did not exceed 2.5 per 1,000 of the population—in Lancashire they actually amounted only to 1.1 per 1,000—as against the figure of 8.7 per 1,000 in the year 1918-19. When, in 1897, the Education Department took a census of secondary schools, it found that of 6,209 schools, attended by 158,502 boys and 133,402 girls, more than two-thirds were conducted by private enterprise, that more than a quarter were endowed schools, embracing every variety of foundation from the wealthy boarding school to the local grammar school with an income from its endowments of a few pounds a year, and that actually less than two per cent. were owned and controlled by public authorities.[2] Apart from the activities of the Charity Commissioners, the intervention of the State in Secondary Education was represented mainly by the Science and Art Department. In so far as School Boards and County Councils had entered the field, they had done so piecemeal and almost furtively, sometimes by straining their powers and almost always in such a way as to compete with each other. Of any conception of the meaning of secondary education, of any central unifying purpose, of any philosophy of its function in society and of its relation to other parts of the educational system, in spite of the teaching of distinguished theorists, there was hardly a trace. The full comedy of the situation was revealed in 1900, when, nearly a century after France and Germany had laid the foundations of a public system of secondary education, the Court of Appeal virtually decided that there was no Public Authority in England with legal power to establish and maintain secondary schools.

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[2] For a convenient summary of the results of this inquiry see Norwood & Hope, "The Higher Education of Boys in England," pp. 39-40.

Of all the medley of schools which could be regarded as giving secondary education twenty years ago, there is probably only one group which can be said to-day to stand approximately where it did. The institutions conventionally described by the comically inappropriate name of Public Schools, and the private schools which prepare boys for them, have doubtless improved their methods and curriculum. Further—an important development—it is probable that the majority of the former are now open to inspection by the Board. But in their dominant characteristics—the classes they serve and the objects at which they aim—they are still much what they were in 1897. In the main, except in the matter of inspection, they stand by their own choice apart from the general system of public secondary education, and need not be taken into account in considering how that system can be improved and extended.

While, however, the great boarding schools, though educationally more efficient, remain in their general purpose and character much what they were, a new system of public secondary education has been brought into existence in the course of the present generation, if not out of nothing, at least out of chaos. It has been built up partly by the entry into a national system of schools already in existence, partly by the establishment of new schools by Local Education Authorities. The intellectual foundations of it were laid by the Royal Commission of 1895. In 1901 the newly established Board of Education began the system of paying grants to such schools as would comply with its regulations, and "recognising as efficient" those which, without accepting grants, submitted to inspection. In 1902 elementary and secondary education were united in the hands of the county and county borough councils. The most obvious quantitative measurement of the movement is the increase in the number of schools on the grant list of the Board of Education. In 1902-3 there were only thirty-one schools in receipt of grants, and the Board still grouped schools of science and secondary schools together under the general name of higher education.

In 1904-5, 482 schools, with 63,782 pupils, were receiving grants; in 1907-8, 742 schools, with 124,110 pupils; by 1914-15, 929 schools, with 180,507 pupils. The war naturally arrested the building of new schools. But in 1919-20 the number of grant-aided secondary schools in England and Wales had risen to 1,140, and the number of pupils to 307,759, or, in England alone to 282,005.[3]

It is true, of course, that this increase in schools and in the school population must not be interpreted as representing anything like an equivalent net increase in the educational resources of the country, or in the number of children profiting by them, since a large proportion of the schools had been in existence before they became eligible for grants from the Board. The variety of institutions included in the system is one of its merits. It is an amalgam of schools old and new, endowed and proprietary, established by public authorities and taken over by them from other bodies. Even so, however, the development, though only the beginning of the provision which requires to be made, is impressive. It is noticeable that, apart from the endowed and other schools which have entered the public system by complying with the Board's regulations and receiving grants, municipal and county authorities have created in the last twenty years a fabric of secondary education which owes nothing to pre-existing institutions. In 1897 less than two per cent. of the secondary schools of the country belonged to Local Authorities. In 1904 Municipal and County Schools numbered sixty-one. By 1912 Local Authorities had established 329 secondary schools and taken over fifty-three. In 1919-20, 487 out of 1,021 grant-aided secondary schools in England were controlled by

[3] Report of the Board of Education for the year 1919-1920 (Cmd. 1451), pp. 30 and 36.

In this Memorandum, both here and below, we are concerned only with schools on the grant list of the Board. The schools "recognised as efficient" by the Board are, of course, more numerous. They numbered in 1919-20, 1,346 in England and Wales, with 344,818 pupils. In addition to these there are "private" schools, of which there appears—a singular fact—to be no correct record.

Local Authorities. In fifteen years, therefore, the schools owned and managed by them had been multiplied approximately eight times. As secondary education develops, it is these schools which will more and more be the dominant and typical element in the system. Apart from them, the schools which in a more general sense are Public Secondary Schools, because they comply with the regulations of the Board and receive grants from it, increased twenty-fold between 1902 and 1914. The number of children educated in them to-day is considerably larger than the number educated in secondary schools of all kinds a generation ago.

Since 1902, therefore, we have nationalised the greater part of secondary education, though the service which we provide is still on a scale quite incommensurate both with the effective demand and—still more—with the educational needs of the community. Not only so, we have begun to communalise it. England has not yet imitated the example set by America and by most of the British Dominions in making public secondary education free. But since 1907 it has been the law of the land that all grant-aided secondary schools, in the absence of special permission by the Board of Education, must admit one quarter of their entrants without payment of fees. As far as some 73,000 children are concerned—nearly one-third of all the pupils in public secondary schools—secondary education is already, like primary education, free. Certain authorities have gone further and abolished fees altogether in the secondary schools provided by them, and certain others propose to do so in the near future. The Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places has just recommended that the payment of fees at grant-aided secondary schools shall be brought to an end as soon as the financial circumstances of the nation allow of that reform being introduced.

Not less important, the quality of secondary education has improved as well as its quantity. It is probably true that in the process of organising secondary education the danger of over-organisation has not been altogether

avoided, that the time of teachers is too often wasted in clerical duties which, however administratively necessary, are certainly not the business of a headmaster or headmistress, and that there is a danger of fettering initiative by insistence that a time table once arranged shall not be modified. But when over-organisation is criticised (as it should be), it ought to be compared with the chaos which existed prior to 1902. No one who will examine English secondary education to-day in the light of the conditions revealed, for example, by the census of 1897, in the "private venture" schools, which formed two-thirds of the total, and the majority of which appear to have been giving, under the name of "secondary," a bad elementary education, will be disposed to question the immense progress which has been made in improving the quality of the staff, in liberalising the curriculum, and in encouraging the advanced work which ought to be the crown of secondary education. So far, indeed, from the supervision of it by a public department producing the deadening uniformity which was dreaded twenty years ago, most candid observers would agree that the Board's regulations, by prescribing a minimum standard as the condition of grant, have brought the laggards and the eccentric into line and raised the general average of efficiency, without seriously cramping the activities of the most enlightened and progressive.

All this means that even before 1918 we had travelled far from the doctrine of 1870, that "elementary" education was the education of a special class which would obtain no other—what the Committee of Council called in 1839 education "suited to the condition of workmen and servants"—and secondary education that of their masters. We had travelled far, but we had not then, and we have not now, travelled far enough. Slender hand-rails—how slender we show below—have been built between the primary and the secondary school. But there is still no vital or organic connection between them. They remain, what they were in origin, two separate systems, and the educational considerations which would unite them have even yet not been strong enough to overcome the social

traditions and class organisation—the fatal legacy of English education—which keep them asunder. It is still true, therefore, that instead of secondary education being, what it ought to be, the education of the adolescent and primary education preparatory education, the former too often is a landing without a staircase, and the latter a staircase without a landing. It is still true that, as far as more than ninety per cent. of the children are concerned, the primary school is like the rope which the Indian juggler throws into the air to end in vacancy; that while in the United States some twenty-eight per cent. of the children entering the primary schools pass to high schools, in England the percentage passing from elementary to secondary schools is less than ten, and that of those who do, the majority have hitherto left at, or soon after, their fifteenth birthday and after a school course of less than three years.

Nor can it be said that there is at present any clear conviction in England as to the part which secondary education should play in the life of the community or as to the lines upon which it should develop in the future. There are some signs, indeed, as we point out below, that the policy advocated in this pamphlet has commended itself to certain of the more progressive Local Education Authorities, several of whom—we need mention only the West Riding and Durham among the counties, and Darlington and West Ham among the county boroughs—appear to envisage as their goal the development of full-time secondary education to such a point that the majority of children may be transferred to a secondary school at eleven, and remain in it to the age of sixteen. But the earlier tradition, which subordinated educational to social and economic considerations, dies hard. Apart from the children of the well-to-do, who receive secondary education almost as a matter of course, and whose parents appear usually, though quite mistakenly, to believe that they pay the whole cost of it, secondary education is still commonly regarded as a "privilege" to be conceded only to the exceptionally brilliant or fortunate. It is still

possible for an association of manufacturers to protest against any wide extension of it for the rank and file of children on the ground that it is likely to be "unsuitable for the employment which they eventually enter."[4] It is still possible for the largest education authority in the country to propose to erect inequality of educational opportunity into a principle of public policy by solemnly suggesting, with much parade of philosophical arguments, that the interests of the community require that the children of well-to-do parents, who pay fees, should be admitted to public secondary schools on easier intellectual terms than the children of poor parents who can enter them only with free places, and that the children who are so contemptible as to be unable to afford secondary education without assistance in the form of maintenance allowances shall not be admitted unless they reach a higher intellectual standard still![5]

These survivals from the doctrines of 1870 have their significance. But they need not disturb us overmuch. It would be a grave injustice to employers to assume that the pronouncement of the Federation of British Industries represents the views of a majority even of its own members : as a matter of fact, indeed, it was immediately repudiated by a considerable proportion of them. Against the special pleading of the London County Council can be set the declarations of Directors of Education and of educational theorists, the policy of twenty other Local Education Authorities, the policy of Parliament itself. For, whatever the shortcomings of the Education Act of 1918, it did two things of capital importance. For the first time in English history it imposed on Local Education Authorities the *duty* of organising higher

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[4] Federation of British Industries Memorandum on Education (January, 1918), p. 4 :—

> At the same time they would very strongly advise that in selecting children for higher education care should be taken to avoid creating, as was done, for example, in India, a large class of persons whose education is unsuitable for the employment they eventually enter.

[5] Scheme of the London County Council (July 21, 1920), pp. 81-83.

education; for the first time it declared that no child capable of profiting by higher education should be prevented from obtaining it by inability to pay fees. But in effect this last provision concedes in principle the very demand for universal secondary education which is urged by the educationalists and which has been for a generation the policy of the Labour movement. For what the most recent expert inquiry tells us is that seventy-five per cent. of the children in the primary schools are intellectually capable of profiting by full-time education up to sixteen.[6] If secondary education is to be so organised that three-quarters of the children are to pass from the primary school to one type or another of secondary school, then clearly the old conception both of "elementary" and of secondary education vanishes for good and all. The latter becomes the education of *all* normal children during the years of adolescence from eleven to sixteen; the former the preparatory education of children of whom three out of four will continue it in a secondary school. The doctrine of the parallel systems with links between them disappears. The doctrine of the single system, with two stages embracing various types of institution, takes its place.

It is such a system which it is the policy of the Labour movement to establish and of this book to commend. In doing so, we would emphasise the word "various." There must be local initiative and experiment. There is no probability that what suits Lancashire or the West Riding will appeal equally to London or Gloucestershire or Cornwall, and if education is to be an inspiration, not a machine, it must reflect the varying social traditions, and moral atmospheres, and economic conditions of different localities. And within the secondary system of each there must be more than one type of school. Like most of our educational terminology, the phrase "secondary education" is not free from ambiguity. No statutory definition of it, so far as we are aware, has ever been given. But, for our purpose, it is sufficient to

[6] Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, 1920 (Cmd. 968), p. 9.

adopt the extremely catholic definition of a secondary school given by the Board as "a school which provides a progressive course of general education suitable for pupils of an age range at least as wide as from twelve to seventeen."[7] Defined by the stage of life for which it provides, it is the education of the adolescent. Defined by its curriculum, it assumes that the preparatory work of developing the simpler processes of thought and expression has already been accomplished, and that its pupils are ready to be introduced, at least in outline and by degrees, to the subjects which will interest them as adults and an acquaintance with which may reasonably be expected from educated men and women. Defined by its purpose, its main aim is not to impart the specialised technique of any particular trade or profession, but to develop the faculties which, because they are the attribute of man, are not peculiar to any particular class or profession of men, and to build up the interests which, while they may become the basis of specialisation at a later stage, have a value extending beyond their utility for any particular vocation, because they are the condition of a rational and responsible life in society.

These general characteristics distinguish the work of the secondary school from other types of education and determine its essential quality. As compared with primary education, it is concerned with children at an age when they are conscious of new powers and eager to come into contact with "real" interests. As compared with technical education, it aims not at the intensive cultivation of some particular aptitude, but, especially in its earlier stages, at laying broad foundations of knowledge by "a curriculum sufficiently comprehensive in range to avoid undue narrowing of outlook, and sufficiently varied in character to arouse latent interests and dormant capacities." It must, in short, be liberal in spirit, must develop so as to keep pace with the development of the pupils, and must retain them sufficiently

[7] Regulations for Secondary Schools, 1921 (Cmd. 1399), chap. I, par. 1.

long to enable the course not merely to be a truncated fragment, but to possess, on its own plane, some degree of unity and completeness.

Provided, however, that these general characteristics are present, the greater the variety among secondary schools the better for education. They will naturally continue to differ in the future, though not, if may be hoped, so widely as to-day, in the length of the school life of their pupils, and therefore in the nature of the course which can be offered them, some leaving at sixteen, others remaining till seventeen or eighteen. Though the subjects required by the Board, English, one foreign language, geography, history, mathematics, science, and drawing, may provide a common nucleus of study, the degree of emphasis laid on the linguistic, as compared with the mathematical and scientific side, will naturally vary from school to school. There will be schools which, without sacrificing the main object of providing a good general education, will properly develop a rural or an industrial "bias," and which will make a generous use of the interest of boys and girls in "practical" work. There will be others which make a speciality f humanistic studies. The demand of Labour for the democratising of secondary education implies no wish to sacrifice the peculiar excellence of particular institutions to a pedantic State-imposed uniformity, still less to forgo the amenities of culture for the sake of a utilitarian efficiency. The Labour movement may reasonably claim, indeed, that those for whom it speaks have been freer from educational Philistinism than many whose educational opportunities have been greater. Its desire is that what is weak in the higher education of the country should be strengthened, and that what is already excellent should be made accessible to all.

That task will demand the continuous effort of a generation. It is for the Labour movement to see that the new order is brought into existence with the utmost possible rapidity, and that no proposal of cheap alternatives is allowed to divert effort and money from its

creation. Thanks to the educational and social developments of the last generation, the time has come when Matthew Arnold's warning, "organise your secondary education," can be given a wider application than it could bear in the seventies of last century. What is needed now is to provide it not merely for the middle classes, to whom his appeal was primarily addressed, but for the children of the whole nation. In pressing for a general system of full-time education up, at least, to sixteen, Labour can claim with some confidence that it is both voicing the demands of nearly all enlightened educationalists and working for the only organisation of education which will enable the community to make the best use of the most precious of its natural resources —the endowments of its children.

We are far, indeed, from making the best use of it today. "The fact to bear in mind at present," *The Times* has truly said, "is that the highway which Mr. Fisher himself helped to construct is effectively blocked. . . . Our educational system is not economical because of the waste of power in the elementary schools. The whole 'elementary system' imposes a wrong upon the 2,000,000 children who are ripe for secondary education and are denied it. Mr. Fisher, at Romford, talked of there being no need for an official definition of elementary and secondary education. We entirely agree; but in fact there is in existence 'elementary' education whether it is defined or not, a type of education which is not secondary, which does not supply an outfit for life, a truncated type of instruction which is condemned on all hands and is responsible for a truncated type of training for teachers. The whole system is wrong and cannot be made right by waiving aside definitions. The country wants no definitions, it wants to be rid, once and for all, of 'elementary' education. *Every child in this country who is intellectually fit for secondary education is entitled to it under the express provisions of the Act of* 1918, *and yet* 2,000,000 *children are clamouring for it only to meet with a blank refusal, not really on the ground of economy at all but because we insist on*

*maintaining an 'elementary' system supplemented by a totally inadequate number of so-called secondary schools, containing a large percentage of children who have no capacity for secondary education at all.* The whole system is wrong, costly, and inefficient. If the Washington Conference succeeds in realising money for 'the progress of civilisation,' the first claim on its use is surely possessed by the children of England. Reconstruction and a better world have been promised to the nation as a reward for the losses and tireless labours of the Great War. There is one supreme way of reconstruction : the creation of such a system of education as will secure the physical, the mental, and the spiritual uplifting of the present generation of children. Those children will determine the whole character of the world, and moneys that can be saved from war should be devoted to this, the main, security for peace. But no money spent will make the present educational system efficient or effective. The system has got to be transformed, and every child has to be assured of the certainty that his capacities will be wrought into their true values. That cannot be the case while local authorities have to work under the Act of 1870. America has no system of 'elementary' education. It stands for primary education followed by universal secondary education, and all that springs from such a basis. Germany, it is true, still holds down the children of the agricultural and industrial classes to a specific limited education. Yet even in Germany the barriers are falling and the highway is opening. In England at present the highway is closed. The most that can be hoped under the present system is an increased drift of children of uncertain intelligence into the overcrowded and unorganised secondary schools, which are devoted according to Mr. Fisher 'to the active business of getting over the examination stile.' Even if the active business were carried on with any clear measure of success, it is not true secondary education. A true secondary system, part and parcel of the people's schools, is yet to be found."[8]

[8] *The Times Educational Supplement*, November 9, 1921.

For the Labour movement itself the issue is vital. The organisation of education on lines of class, which, though qualified in the last twenty years, has characterised the English system of public education since its very inception, has been at once a symptom, an effect, and a cause of the control of the lives of the mass of men and women by a privileged minority. The very assumption on which it is based, that all that the child of the workers needs is "elementary education"—as though the mass of the people, like anthropoid apes, had fewer convolutions in their brains than the rich—is in itself a piece of insolence. It has been maintained, in spite of repeated demands by the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress for free and universal secondary education, because those who have hitherto governed the nation, believing, and believing with justice, that ignorance and docility go hand in hand, have taken care to ration the education of the workers in doses small enough to be innocuous to the established order. Organised Labour has fought many ringing battles against that odious doctrine of class domination in the world of industry, and will fight more in the future. But, if it is to liberate the lives of the rising generation, it must also emancipate their minds. It must lay the foundations of a democratic society not only in the workshop and in Parliament, but in the schools.

## CHAPTER II

# THE PRESENT POSITION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

IN the present chapter we endeavour to present in a summary form certain broad and elementary facts as to public secondary education in England, in particular the evidence as to the unsatisfied demand for secondary education, the number of children entering secondary schools, and the length of the school life. The questions involved are obviously of the first importance. If there is a keen demand among parents for higher education, then the community can proceed to increase the facilities for obtaining it without any anxiety lest they should not be utilised. If children pass easily to a secondary school, and neither are refused because there are no available school places nor prevented from entering by the poverty of their parents, then, other things being equal, educational opportunities are widely distributed, and the nation is making an intelligent use of its human resources. If, having entered a secondary school, nearly all of them remain till sixteen and a substantial proportion to seventeen or eighteen, then not only is the school course long enough to have a profound effect on the character and intellect of the vast majority of children, but there is a large reservoir in the public secondary schools, fed from all classes of the community, upon which the Universities and the professions can draw for recruits. If the majority of boys and girls receive a full-time education up to sixteen, then, what is even more important, quite apart from the selection of special talent for special cultivation, the rank and file of the community will carry into their working lives the idealism, the corporate loyalty, the intellectual alertness which are

fostered during the impressionable years of adolescence by the life of a good school, and their outlook will gradually permeate and transform the whole structure of society, as, with all the difficulties which have confronted the primary school, it has been largely transformed since 1870 by primary education. To some of these larger considerations we return in a later chapter. At present we are concerned only to set out the facts, and, where possible, the figures, with such comments as may be needed to explain them.

## I

## THE DEMAND FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

The most obvious of the facts revealed by an inquiry into secondary education is the growth which has taken place in the last ten years in the public demand for it. It is sometimes suggested that if the percentage of children who pass from primary to secondary schools is small —a point to which we return later[1]—the explanation is to be found, not in any lack of facilities, but in the indifference of the parents. Whether there has even been in recent times a period in which, given a sufficient number of school places and adequate machinery for overcoming the economic obstacles to higher education, there were not a large number of parents eager to secure it for their children, is a point which we need not discuss, since it is only in the last twenty years that these conditions have begun to be brought into existence. Before 1902 a system of public secondary education hardly existed. Before 1907 there was no compulsory provision of free places. Public policy was dominated by what may be called the doctrine of 1870, according to which "elementary" education was not one stage in a course extending from childhood through adolescence, but a special and self-sufficient kind of education designed for a particular section of the community, and that attitude met, if not with approval, at least with acquiescence, on the part of the great mass of working class opinion. The

[1] See Section II of this chapter and Chapter III.

result was that the advantages of secondary education, which in any case was almost unobtainable, were hardly considered, and that a generation ago working class parents, with rare exceptions, no more thought of sending their children to a secondary school than they thought of sending them to Oxford or Cambridge.

The change in the supply of secondary education which has taken place since 1902 has already been described. But it is not always realised, except by those directly engaged in educational administration, that, greatly as it has increased, it is far from having kept pace with the growth of the demand. Almost the most impressive feature of the world of public education to-day is the fact that, in spite of the economic obstacles which prevent many children, as to whose ability there is no doubt, from entering secondary schools, of the serious difficulties arising, especially in rural districts, from the distance which must often be travelled in order to reach school, and of the competitive examination which is the normal test of admission, the number of children applying for admission to secondary schools to-day largely exceeds the accommodation available for receiving them.

The fact is that in the last fifteen years a revolution has taken place in the educational outlook of a considerable section of the population, the effects of which are only now beginning to be felt. On the one hand, the increase in the number of secondary schools, the requirement by the Board since 1905 that intending teachers should have a secondary education at least up to sixteen, and the establishment since 1907 of a system of free places for children from the primary schools, have all combined to make secondary education a familiar idea among classes who thirty years ago had hardly heard of it. On the other hand, during the years from 1914 to 1918 a considerable number of families found themselves, temporarily at least, in improved economic circumstances, and used part of such margin of income as they possessed to send their children to a secondary school, or, if they were attending one already, to keep them there longer. When in Bradford a plebiscite was taken of the

parents of children who, after entering for the scholarship examination, had failed to secure admission to a secondary school, in order to ascertain whether, if secondary school accommodation were available, they would be prepared to keep their children at school to fifteen+, more than 1,000 out of 2,800 replied in the affirmative. That result is typical of the degree to which the provision of a secondary education for one or more of their children has to-day become the aspiration of families who, twenty years ago, would have withdrawn them from school at the earliest age which the law allowed. One consequence is that, though the secondary school population has more than doubled within the last twelve years, the increase, so far from satisfying the demand, has given it an additional impetus by spreading more widely the knowledge both of the meaning of secondary education and of the possibility, under favourable circumstances, of obtaining it. In the words of the Scheme of Education prepared by the London County Council: "It is perhaps the best testimony to the influence of the secondary schools that at the present time they cannot accommodate the large number who are seeking admission to them. They have helped to create a demand which has outrun the supply."[2]

How widespread that demand is, is emphasised again and again in the schemes prepared by Local Education Authorities under the Act of 1918. In London, where in March, 1919, there was accommodation for 18,315 boys in the public secondary schools, the numbers actually in attendance were 18,882. "One of the outstanding features in connection with education," states the Birmingham Education Authority, "is the great increase in the numbers of children anxious to enter secondary schools and capable of profiting thereby. To meet the demand, the various schools, with the permission of the Board, have granted admission almost to the point of overcrowding. Despite this the Authority has been reluctantly compelled to refuse admission to numbers

[2] Scheme of the London County Council (July 21, 1921), p. 28.

of well qualified children." From Leeds comes the statement that "it seems impossible just now to meet adequately the demand for secondary education . . . .; it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that during the next ten years there will be required at least 2,000 additional secondary school places." Manchester, Salford, Bradford, Stockport, Liverpool, Wallasey, Wakefield, Southampton—to mention only a few towns out of many—all call attention to the increased number of applicants for admission to secondary schools and the present shortage of accommodation. Nor is it only the large urban authorities with whom the problem is acute. It is emphasised by the authorities of Staffordshire, where the director speaks of "the sudden outburst of zeal for secondary education," of Kent, Devonshire, Essex, Rutland, Warwickshire, and Lancashire. In the County of Durham, states the Director of Education, where the existing secondary schools provide for 3,000 children, "although the amount of secondary school accommodation is so restricted, and many of the parents know how difficult it is to secure admission on account of the dearth, about 5,000 elementary school scholars apply annually for admission to secondary schools."[3]

The clearest indication of the growing appetite for secondary education is the fact that large numbers of children are at present refused admission to secondary schools, not because they do not reach the intellectual standard demanded, but because there is no accommodation for them. The gravity of the present situation is shown by the following table[4] :—

[3] For the facts and quotations in this paragraph the reader is referred to the schemes prepared under the Act of 1918 for the authorities of the areas mentioned. The more elaborate of them—mention may be made in particular of those of London, Kent, Staffordshire, Durham, and Birmingham—contain a mine of valuable information as to the present position of English education.

[4] Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, 1920 (Cmd. 968), App. I, Table D. (It should be noted that some unsuccessful candidates for free places are afterwards admitted as fee-paying pupils.) For fuller particulars see App. to this Memorandum, Table II.

| —— | (i) No. of applicants for admission as fee-paying pupils to grant-aided secondary schools excluded at beginning of 1919-20 for want of accommodation | | | (ii) No. of applicants to same whom school authorities would have been ready to admit had free places been available | | | (iii) Total of (i) and (ii) | | | (iv) No. of free places not taken up at beginning of 1919-20 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total | |
| ENGLAND | | | | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 3,152 | 2,043 | 5,195 | 3,121 | 2,265 | 5,386 | 6,273 | 4,308 | 10,581 | 115 |
| County boroughs | 1,763 | 2,313 | 4,076 | 1,799 | 1,595 | 3,394 | 3,562 | 3,908 | 7,470 | 53 |
| Total ..... | 4,915 | 4,356 | 9,271 | 4,920 | 3,860 | 8,780 | 9,835 | 8,216 | 18,051 | 168 |
| WALES | | | | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 150 | 311 | 461 | 703 | 640 | 1,343 | 853 | 951 | 1,804 | 59 |
| County boroughs | 176 | 168 | 344 | 587 | 424 | 1,011 | 763 | 592 | 1,355 | — |
| Total ..... | 326 | 479 | 805 | 1,290 | 1,064 | 2,354 | 1,616 | 1,543 | 3,159 | 59 |

It will be seen from these figures that, quite apart from any proposed extension of secondary education, the existing accommodation is gravely inadequate even to the present demand. Actually 9,271 children were excluded from secondary schools in England at the beginning of 1919-20 because there was no accommodation of any kind for them, and a further 8,780 because, though they reached the standard required, there were not sufficient free places to make it possible to take them in. In 1919-20, therefore, had the necessary provision been available, the secondary school population of England would have been increased by something over 18,000 children, a number equal to between seven and eight per cent. of the existing population of grant-aided secondary schools, and rather more than the total population in grant-aided secondary schools in the counties and county boroughs of Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, and Westmoreland. If 500 is taken as the number of children in a secondary school, then, in order merely to meet the demand actually made in 1919-20, thirty-six more such schools would have been needed.

In reality, of course, the number rejected is not an accurate measure of the number desirous of obtaining secondary education. On the one hand, as is pointed out by the Director of Education for the County of Durham in the passage quoted above, a considerable, though uncertain, number of parents refrain from applying for the admission of their children to secondary schools, because they know that, in the present shortage of accommodation, their application is almost certain to be refused. On the other hand, these figures relate to England as a whole, and thus conceal the special deficiencies of the more backward areas. In South Staffordshire, for example, the Director of Education for the county states that the present secondary school population (to be increased by the creation of five new schools) is at what he describes as "the scandalously low rate"[5] of 2.03 boys and 2.08 girls per 1,000 of the population. It is no consolation to a parent who sees

[5] Scheme of Education, Staffordshire County Council Education Committee, p. 21.

his child deprived of a secondary education because he is not within reach of any school, in, say, Herefordshire or Huntingdon, to know that in Lancashire or the West Riding or London secondary schools are more abundant. The amount of accommodation must necessarily vary from area to area. But it would obviously be desirable that it should bear some definite relation to the child population. The ideal to be aimed at, in short, would be that there should be a minimum standard of secondary school places based on the number of children in attendance at the primary schools. It would appear from the figures given in the Appendix, Tables I. and III., that that result is very far from being attained.

These figures do not pretend to complete accuracy. But even when allowance is made for a considerable margin of error, it will be seen that there is nothing approaching a constant relation between the primary school population and the number of children attending public secondary schools, which, owing to the fact that the secondary schools are almost everywhere full to overcrowding, is for practical purposes equivalent to the secondary school accommodation. Broadly speaking, it would probably be true to say that the factors determining the supply of secondary school accommodation are partly historical, partly economic, some districts which have to-day a relatively small population possessing a comparatively large number of old endowed schools, which have been converted since 1902 into grant-earning secondary schools, others having made up for the lack of old foundations by possessing resources which enabled them to build county and municipal secondary schools. To some extent these two factors balance each other. But they are far from doing so entirely. West Ham is populous but poor; Cornwall sparsely populated but relatively well supplied with secondary schools.

The result is that educational opportunities vary widely from district to district. As between urban and rural districts, in spite of the higher proportion of secondary to primary scholars shown by certain

county authorities, it is normally the rural districts in which secondary education is least accessible. It is not merely that the proportion of children in secondary schools per 1,000 of the population is, on the whole, higher in county boroughs than in counties, but that the population of an agricultural district is not concentrated, and that therefore, even when a county is relatively well supplied with schools, their distance from the homes of many of the children is a serious obstacle. A single example may serve to illustrate the conditions which, in some rural areas, still make secondary education almost unobtainable by a considerable proportion of the population. Gloucestershire (thanks to the piety and wool trade of the later middle ages) is by no means badly supplied with secondary schools. But out of its eleven urban districts there is one, and out of its twenty-two rural districts there are actually ten, in which no secondary school at all is in existence. For a population, in fact, of over 50,000 persons, with some 5,000 children between eleven and fifteen years of age, secondary education is out of the question. It is obviously impossible to state what its demand for secondary education would be in different circumstances, because the demand does not become vocal till facilities for satisfying it are brought into existence. What is clear is that to the unsatisfied demand, which, as proved by applications for admission to secondary schools, already exists, must be added a large potential demand which only requires opportunity to find expression. If the experience during the last decade of those areas which are relatively well equipped with secondary schools is a safe indication, the first result of bringing secondary education within reach of sections of the population to whom it is at present almost inaccessible will be to create a demand for it with which only the most strenuous effort will enable the supply to keep pace.

## II

## THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS

We turn next to the question of the diffusion of secondary education—the question, that is to say, of the

number of children who, at one time and another, for a shorter or longer period, do in fact enter a secondary school, and of the proportion which such children form of those leaving the primary schools.[6]

The latest estimate is that contained in the report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places,[7] which gives the number of children in grant-aided secondary, junior technical, and similar schools per 1,000 of the population.

The figures are as follows :—

[6] This question is crucial, but the answer to it is not easy. It is not merely that no reliable information exists as to the endowed boarding schools and private schools preparatory to them, with which we are not concerned. It is that no satisfactory figures are available even as to those schools which are part of the system of public education. The Board publishes statistics of the number of boys and girls in schools aided by grants and schools recognised as efficient. But it does not state how many children are in secondary schools per thousand of the population in each area ; still less does it reveal, what is more important, the number of children in each area annually leaving primary schools, and the number of children entering secondary schools from them and from other sources. Figures have from time to time been published by private investigators, by official committees and commissions, and by Local Education Authorities. But they have the disadvantage that they appear rarely to be collected on the same basis. Some inquiries estimate the number of children in secondary schools per thousand of population, some the number per thousand children in the corresponding age groups, some the number per thousand children between ten and eleven in the elementary schools, and some the percentage of children leaving the primary schools who enter secondary schools in a given year. The commonest basis is probably the first. It is also the least illuminating, but has the advantage of making possible a comparison with foreign countries, where it appears to be usually adopted. The most useful, if it were available, would be the last. In view of the great importance of the subject, it may be suggested that the Board should publish every year, in its annual report, figures (*a*) of the children leaving the primary schools in the area of each authority, (*b*) the number of children from primary schools entering secondary schools with and without free places, (*c*) the number of children entering secondary schools from private schools. Labour members of Local Education Authorities should press for the annual publication of similar figures for their respective areas.

[7] Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, 1920 (Cmd. 968), App. I, Table A.

(i) NUMBERS IN GRANT-AIDED SECONDARY, JUNIOR TECHNICAL, AND SIMILAR SCHOOLS, IN FIRST TERM OF 1919–20

| Area | Estimated population, 1919 | (a) Grant-aided secondary schools, excluding preparatory departments | (b) Preparatory departments | (c) Junior technical and similar schools | Total | No. of children in (a), (b), and (c) per 1,000 of the population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ENGLAND— | | | | | | |
| Counties ... | 21,826,546 | 154,248 (7·0 per 1,000) | 15,760 | 4,956 | 174,964 | 8·0 |
| County boroughs | 11,587,251 | 100,472 (8·6 per 1,000) | 11,184 | 4,466 | 116,122 | 10·0 |
| Total..... | 33,413,797 | 254,720 (7·6 per 1,000) | 26,944 | 9,422 | 291,086 | 8·7 |
| WALES— | | | | | | |
| Counties ... | 2,023,933 | 20,840 (10·2 per 1,000) | 109 | — | 20,949 | 10·3 |
| County boroughs | 524,135 | 4,776 ( 9·1 per 1,000) | 29 | 147 | 4,952 | 9·4 |
| Total..... | 2,548,068 | 25,616 (10·05 per 1,000) | 138 | 147 | 25,901 | 10·2 |

It will be seen from this table that, in the first term of the year 1919-20, the proportion of children in grant-aided secondary schools (including preparatory departments), junior technical, and similar schools was 8.7 per 1,000 of the population in England and 10.2 in Wales. If preparatory departments and junior technical and similar schools are excluded, it was 7.6 per 1,000 in England and 10.05 per 1,000 in Wales. Between different parts of the country there are considerable variations. Everywhere, except in the East Central Division, the number of children per 1,000 in secondary schools was higher in the county boroughs than in the counties. The area in which it was greatest was in the county boroughs of the South-Western Division, where it was 12.8, and of the North-Eastern Division, where it was 12.2. It was lowest in the counties of the Northern Division (6.1), and of the North-Western Division (6.2).

Statistics of the number of children per 1,000 attending a secondary school are useful for the purpose of comparison with foreign countries, and for offering a simple standard by which Local Education Authorities can work. They do not, however, answer the question : How many children pass from primary to secondary schools? And this question is vital, since upon the answer to it depends whether equality of educational opportunity is a reality or a fiction. Unfortunately, no entirely satisfactory evidence on this point is available. The figures as to the composition of the population of secondary schools, which are sometimes quoted as proving that secondary education is easily accessible, are not, of course, relevant. What they show is that *of the children who enter a secondary school* roughly sixty to seventy per cent. have come from a primary school. But, in so far as secondary school accommodation is deficient, or as parents of small means are unable to send their children to secondary schools, the fact that about two-thirds of the pupils in them have previously attended primary schools would be quite compatible with secondary education being—what in fact it still very largely is—a luxury obtained by only an insignificant

percentage of children. What it is important to know, and what these figures do not tell us, is not merely what proportion of secondary school pupils have attended a primary school, but *what proportion of children leaving the primary school begin, at any rate, a secondary education.*

While, however, no exact answer can be given to this question, estimates have from time to time been put forward by means of which an approximate judgment of the situation can be formed. In 1912, in a memorandum prepared for the Royal Commission on the Civil Service, the Board of Education stated that "from calculations recently made by the Board for other purposes it appears that of the children leaving the public elementary schools in that year (*i.e.*, in 1911) about one child in twenty-three goes to a public secondary school." The Departmental Committee on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War made the following estimate of the number and percentage of children in each age group "under full-time instruction in State-aided and other[8] secondary schools recognised by the Board of Education" :—

| 12–13 | 13–14 | 14–15 | 15–16 | 16–17 | 17–18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 32,709 | 36,455 | 30,722 | 20,628 | 11,522 | 4,905 |
| (4·68) | (5·28) | (4·47) | (3·08) | (1·71) | (0·74) |

Finally, in 1920 the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places published figures of the number of children admitted to grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar institutions during 1918-19, compared with the number of children between the ages of ten and eleven in the primary

[8] Final Report of the Departmental Committee on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War, 1917 (Cmd. 8512). The "other secondary schools" were presumably schools "recognised as efficient" by the Board. The figures were probably out of date when they appeared, as they seem to have been based on returns relating to the year 1911 (see Report, p. 31).

schools on January 31, 1919. The most important facts which they reveal are set out in the following table[9] :—

| —— | Percentage of admissions of children *from public elementary schools* into grant-earning secondary schools, junior technical institutes, and similar schools to number in public elementary schools between ten and eleven | Percentage of *total* admissions to grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar schools to numbers in public elementary schools between ten and eleven |
|---|---|---|
| ENGLAND— | | |
| Counties ..... | 8·8 | 13·3 |
| County boroughs . | 10·7 | 15·0 |
| Total ..... | 9·5 | 13·9 |
| WALES— | | |
| Counties ..... | 14·6 | 16·3 |
| County boroughs . | 12·3 | 14·0 |
| Total ..... | 14·4 | 15·8 |

These figures do not show with precision the proportion of children who pass from primary schools to secondary schools. But they make possible an approximate estimate. The Board's calculation for the year 1911 may be taken as a *minimum*, which is now out of date. In that year the proportion of ex-elementary school children entering secondary schools was 4.3 per cent., and since the population of English grant-aided secondary schools increased

[9] Cmd. 968, App. I, Table B. The first column in the table printed above (percentage of admissions from public elementary schools, &c.) does not appear in Table B of the Report, but has been calculated from the figures contained in it. For the figures on which those given above are based see Table II in Appendix of the present Memorandum.

from 151,045 in 1911 to 308,372 in 1919, it may be assumed that the proportion has increased. On the other hand, the figure given by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places is a *maximum*, and it would not be correct to suppose that the proportion borne by entrants to secondary schools to children leaving primary schools was in fact represented by it. It will be seen that in the year 1918-1919 the entrants from primary schools to grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar institutions stood to each 100 of the boys and girls in primary schools between ten and eleven (at which age entrance to secondary schools begins) in the proportion of 9.5 in England and of 14.4 in Wales. This proportion is obviously higher than that which would be reached by taking the figure of entrants into grant-aided secondary schools *alone*. Further, as up to 1921 children left the primary schools from the age groups thirteen to fourteen and fourteen to fifteen, in addition to entering part-time employment at twelve, this figure is also higher than that which would result from comparing entrants to secondary schools with *all* children leaving primary schools.

Where exactly between the minimum of 4.3 per cent. and the maximum of 9.5 per cent. the figure ought at the present moment actually to be placed it is not easy to determine. In Manchester, which is certainly not abnormally backward, the Director of Education states that "it would be approximately correct to say that out of 12,000 children finally leaving the Manchester elementary schools every year only about 600 enter the Manchester secondary schools.[10] It must, of course, be borne in mind that the number of *entrants* is not to be read as implying that an equivalent number of children *remain* under education in secondary schools for any considerable length of time—a point to which we return later. As is shown by the figures quoted above from the

[10] Spurley Hey, Director of Education, *Manchester Educational Problems* (December, 1918), p. 24.

Report on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War, the school life of most of them is deplorably short; the percentage of each age group receiving secondary education is, in fact, at its maximum between thirteen and fourteen, and falls rapidly after fourteen. Further, it must be remembered that of the pupils in secondary schools a considerable proportion have sought admission to them with a view to becoming qualified as teachers. It is, of course, eminently desirable that intending teachers should receive a secondary school education. But in considering the influence of public secondary education on national life, it is proper to remember that hitherto it has been largely, though not predominantly, occupied with providing recruits for a single profession, that of teaching.

## III

## THE DURATION OF THE SCHOOL LIFE

In the preceding section we have been concerned with the *entrants* to public secondary schools. But obviously, in order to form an opinion of the diffusion of secondary education, it is necessary to know not only the numbers entering the secondary schools in the first instance, but the average length of their school life. Between about five and nine per cent. of the children leaving the primary schools are admitted to secondary schools. How long do they remain in them?

The short duration of the school life among boys and girls admitted to secondary schools has been a constant complaint of educational reformers for the past twenty years. The advantage of even a short period of attendance at a secondary school must not, it is true, be underestimated, nor must remedies be proposed which would lengthen it only at the cost of drastically reducing the number entering secondary schools in the first instance. Even if the supply of free places and maintenance allowances is very largely increased, economic pressure will continue to compel a large number of parents to withdraw their children from school at, or soon after, their

fifteenth birthday. To lay down (as was suggested by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places) that only those children should enter a secondary school who are prepared to remain in it to at least sixteen would be, in effect, to deprive a considerable number of children of any secondary education at all on the ground that it is desirable for them to obtain more of it. We are inclined, therefore, to question the wisdom of the paragraph (chapter I., paragraph 2) introduced into the Regulations of 1921, which declares that a school will not be recognised for payment of grants unless . . . ."the school life of the pupils normally extends to at least the age of sixteen." It is, of course, most desirable that children should remain at school till that age. But can it honestly be said that the community has taken sufficient pains to smooth the road to higher education to be in a position to impose disabilities on those who travel only part of the way along it?

While, however, the expediency of insisting that all children entering a secondary school shall remain till at least sixteen may be doubted, the emphasis of the Board of Education on the importance of lengthening the school life will command general approval. However much value may be attached to even a short period spent in the environment of a good secondary school, it will be generally agreed that, up, at least, to sixteen, each successive year gives a more than proportionate return. It is in the later parts of the school course that a child reaps much of the benefit of the work which has gone before, and every pupil who leaves before the age of sixteen represents, if not, as is sometimes said, a waste of educational resources, at least a plan of development which has been interrupted before it could mature.

The following figures[11] show (i) the average leaving age of boys and girls attending grant-aided secondary schools from 1907-1913; (ii) the average length of their school life; (iii) their age distribution.

[11] See the annual reports of the Board of Education.

AVERAGE LEAVING AGE

| | 1907–10 | 1908–11 | 1909–12 | 1910–13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boys ..... | 15·6 | 15·7 | 15·7 | 15·7 |
| Girls ..... | 16·0 | 16·0 | 16·0 | 16·0 |

AVERAGE LENGTH OF SCHOOL LIFE

| | 1907–10 | 1908–11 | 1909–12 | 1910–13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Boys ..... | 2·7 | 2·8 | 2·8 | 2·9 |
| Girls ..... | 2·7 | 2·9 | 2·10 | 2·11 |

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS

| October 1 | Under 10 | 10–12 | 12–16 | 16–18 | 18+ | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1914 ..... | 14,385 | 30,468 | 120,176 | 14,488 | 990 | 180,507 |
| 1915 ..... | 15,710 | 33,213 | 124,910 | 14,646 | 858 | 189,487 |
| 1916 ..... | 17,225 | 36,317 | 130,306 | 14,096 | 815 | 198,759 |
| 1917 ..... | 19,577 | 40,709 | 141,498 | 14,506 | 689 | 216,979 |
| 1918 ..... | 23,187 | 48,723 | 157,559 | 16,018 | 703 | 246,190 |
| 1919 ..... | 27,027 | 56,359 | 177,988 | 19,593 | 1,038 | 282,005 |
| 1920 ..... | 29,232 | 60,505 | 194,665 | 22,762 | 1,208 | 308,372 |

These figures show that, while the school life had somewhat lengthened between 1907 and 1913, it was still lamentably short. On the average, boys left at just over fifteen and a half, after spending two and three-quarter years in school, girls at sixteen, after spending just under three years. Complete figures for a later date than 1913 are not obtainable, but such information as is available does not suggest that there has been any substantial change. It should be observed, further, that in so far as a lengthening of the school life has taken place, it has been due rather to a reduction of the age of admission than to a postponement of the age of leaving, children under ten forming 7.9 per cent. of all secondary school pupils in 1914, and 9.4 per cent. in 1920. The result is deplorable. It is that, as the following figures show,[12] the age group containing the largest number of secondary school children is actually that from thirteen to fourteen, and that the smallest is between sixteen and seventeen.

[12] Final Report of the Departmental Committee on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War, 1917 (Cmd. 8512).

HURRARD MEN'S COLLEGE

| Age group .... | 12–13 | 13–14 | 14–15 | 15–16 | 16–17 | 17–18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number ..... | 32,709 | 36,455 | 30,722 | 20,628 | 11,522 | 4,905 |
| Percentage of all children in same age-group ..... | 4·68 | 5·28 | 4·47 | 3·08 | 1·71 | 0·74 |

In other words wastage begins immediately after the fourteenth birthday, and at the age of sixteen to seventeen, the age immediately preceding entry into a University, less than two per cent. of the boys and girls of the country were receiving, when these figures were published, a full-time education in a public secondary school.

One other point deserves attention, because it reveals the economic reasons which shorten the school life. The following figures give the average school life and leaving age of a group of boys and girls in the year 1912-13, distinguishing between fee-paying and free pupils :—

| England and Wales | Number who left under twelve years of age | Pupils who left after reaching twelve years of age | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Total No. | Average school life (omitting school life below age of twelve) | Average age at leaving |
| *Boys*— | | | | |
| (i) Fee-paying pupils ... | 1,981 | 16,588 | 2·6 | 15·5 |
| (ii) Free pupils | 86 | 8,319 | 3·3 | 15·10 |
| (iii) Total ..... | 2,067 | 24,907 | 2·9 | 15·7 |
| *Girls*— | | | | |
| (i) Fee-paying pupils ... | 1,376 | 12,088 | 2·6 | 15·8 |
| (ii) Free pupils | 39 | 7,253 | 3·10 | 16·6 |
| (iii) Total ..... | 1,415 | 19,341 | 3·0 | 16·0 |

It will be seen that among the boys the free pupils remained at school on the average nine months, and among the girls sixteen months, longer than the fee-paying pupils. The moral is obvious. If the community

desire to increase the number of children in the advanced stages of secondary education, it must increase the provision of free places. If the public will find the money the pupils will find themselves.[13]

[13] It should be noted, however, that the discrepancy is somewhat exaggerated in the figures given above, since some Authorities require free-placers to sign an agreement to remain at school till a certain age.

## CHAPTER III

# THE PROGRAMME OF LABOUR

## I

## THE NEED OF INCREASING THE PUPILS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

THE evidence summarised in the preceding chapter shows that the pupils in grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar institutions form about 8.7 per 1,000 of the population in England and 10.2 in Wales, and that of the children leaving primary schools in England something over five per cent. and under nine per cent. are admitted for a shorter or longer period to secondary schools. It is evident that, compared with the conditions of thirty years ago, these figures represent a genuine movement in the direction of democratising secondary education. But it is evident also that that movement has hardly more than begun. As long as more than seven-eighths of the children who leave the primary schools do not even begin a course of higher education, and of those who begin it the majority end it before the age of fifteen, the waste of human capacity suffered by the community is as tragic as the baulked aspirations of children and their parents, and the so-called "educational ladder" is, not a ladder, but a greasy pole. The most urgent educational task before the nation is to take at the earliest possible date the measures needed to secure a large increase in the secondary school population.

The paramount importance of securing a far wider diffusion of secondary education than exists to-day is probably, indeed, the point upon which there is at present the most general agreement among educationalists. It has been emphasised by Parliament, by Local Education Authorities, and by the Board of Education, as well

as by students of education. The Act of 1918, which for the first time has made the provision of secondary education a statutory duty, has laid upon Education Authorities the obligation of using their powers in such a way that "adequate provision shall be made to secure that children and young persons shall not be debarred from receiving the benefits of any form of education of which they are capable of profiting through inability to pay fees." Education Authorities themselves, as has been shown in a preceding chapter, have, with hardly an exception, stated that the provision for secondary education in their areas is gravely deficient. The most recent expert inquiry has stated that the secondary school population ought to be more than doubled, and, possibly, in a more distant future multiplied eight-fold, and has urged a large increase in the number of free places. *The Times* has pleaded for universal secondary education. The President of the Board of Education has stated that "the primary need of the moment is the multiplication of secondary schools."[1]

Nor can we afford to neglect the experience of other nations. England has gone farther than France and Germany to bridge the gulf between primary and secondary education. In most parts of the United States[2] and of the British Dominions it has never existed to the same extent. In the former in 1913, 14.4 per 1,000 of the population were attending high schools, compared with 8.7 in England, and while less than nine per cent. of children leaving primary schools entered grant-aided secondary schools in England, the percentage of children entering primary schools in the United States who passed from them to high schools was actually twenty-eight. In the United States, as in England, the wastage during the secondary school course is heavy, and less than one-third of those who entered the high school appear to remain in it until their fourth year. But

[1] House of Commons, August 12, 1919.

[2] For facts and figures as to the United States of America see Sandiford, *Comparative Education*, pp. 58 *seq.*, and for Canada, *ibid.*, pp. 402 *seq.*

in the United States secondary education is normally a continuation of primary education, not, as in England, a separate and parallel system, to which some slender bridges have been thrown. For a child to pass from the latter to the former is not an achievement attained only by exceptional ability or good fortune, but a common, and, in certain States, almost a normal, incident.[3]

There is, therefore, a general agreement as to the necessity of increasing the number of pupils in secondary schools and, in particular, of smoothing the passage from primary to secondary education. In practice, however, that agreement is compatible with the widest diversity of opinion as to the extent of the provision to be made. The Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places,[4] while declining to commit itself positively to any definite figure, mentioned three standards as having been submitted to it, that of ten secondary school places per 1,000 of the population proposed by the London County Council, which it regarded as a minimum; that of twenty per 1,000, which it regarded itself as "a better basis for reasonable development," and that based on the opinion of educational experts that seventy-five per cent. of the children in the primary schools, roughly 2,250,000 children, apart from those who have not attended a secondary school, were "intellectually capable of profiting by full-time instruction up to or beyond sixteen." If the first standard were adopted, the number of children attending secondary schools in England and Wales would be 360,000, or only 65,000 more than it is to-day; if the second, it would be 720,000; on the view that three-quarters of the children should attend secondary schools,

[3] Table III in the Appendix shows (i) the number of children enrolled in grant-aided secondary schools in certain counties and county boroughs in England for each thousand in the primary schools; (ii) the number of children enrolled in high schools in different States of the Union for each thousand in the primary schools.

[4] *Op. cit.*, pp. 9–10.

the ratio of school places to the population would not, as now, be 8.7 per 1,000, nor even, as the committee think should be the standard for the immediate future, twenty per 1,000, but 62.5 per 1,000. The secondary school population would, in fact, be increased about eight-fold.

The schemes of development submitted by Local Education Authorities show a similar diversity of opinion. Virtually all are agreed that, in order to be reasonably adequate, secondary school accommodation must be largely increased. But here their agreement ceases, and to the question, "What is adequate?" a variety of answers is given. The scheme of Gloucestershire looks forward to the time when secondary education will be universal—"free and compulsory up to the age of sixteen." West Ham, while stating that "free full-time education for all to the age of sixteen" is "the goal of the development of the stage of educational advance with which the present scheme is concerned," proposes that in the immediate future secondary school accommodation shall be provided for the comparatively modest number of 3,000 children, or slightly over ten per 1,000 of the population. The London County Council is content to reaffirm the standard of ten per 1,000 of the population which was stated to be necessary as long ago as 1909, and proposes, as an alternative to further increasing secondary schools, to raise the accommodation of the central schools from 23,000 to 40,000 places. The counties of Durham and Devonshire propose to take as the guide to their immediate policy the ratio of twelve per 1,000; Kent of fifteen per 1,000; Norwich of eighteen per 1,000, and York of twenty per 1,000.[5]

So far as the immediate task of meeting the demand for secondary education is concerned, these differences of opinion are not for the moment of any very great practical importance. The significant fact is that a large increase in the secondary school population is generally recognised to be essential. Even if the standard taken were only sixteen per 1,000, the effect would be

[5] See the schemes of the authorities mentioned.

approximately to double it. To find school places and to provide teachers for some 570,000 instead of 294,000 children will demand all the energies of Local Educational Authorities during the next five or ten years. To secure that, when provided, the places are occupied, that children are not debarred from secondary education by "inability to pay fees," and that a larger proportion remain to the age of sixteen will raise the whole question of the desirability of freeing secondary education.

To that question we turn in a subsequent chapter. But opinion both as to the desirability of freeing secondary education and as to the figure to be taken as the standard of adequacy in the provision of school places depends in the last resort upon the view which is held of the place of the secondary school in the educational system and of the proper relation between primary and secondary education. The different standards to which different authorities propose to work are due not merely to the varying economic circumstances of different localities, but, at any rate, in some cases, to a radical, if sometimes not fully realised, divergence of educational and social theory. It would be a mistake to suppose that the general agreement as to the urgency of an immediate extension of secondary education makes it superfluous to consider the larger questions of policy involved. We ought in this matter to learn from past experience. The refusal to view the different stages of education as a unified whole, which was almost a principle (if not, indeed, the only principle) of public policy down to 1902, resulted in an unnatural division of primary from secondary education, in the starving of the secondary schools and the perversion of the primary schools from their proper function of providing a preparatory education, and in the multiplication of makeshifts—higher grade schools, higher elementary schools, higher tops, evening classes—to repair the mischief caused by a divorce which should never have existed.

What we have to ensure now is that, in the development of a system of higher education, that mistake is not

repeated. There is ample room for variety of institutions, and no one would propose that experiment should be sacrificed to any pedantic passion for uniformity. But between the policy of what is virtually universal secondary education, urged by some Local Education Authorities and supported by the statement of the Departmental Committee that seventy-five per cent. of the children in the primary schools are capable of profiting by full time instruction up to sixteen or beyond, and the policy of providing secondary school places for a smaller fraction of the children leaving the primary schools and accommodating the remainder in central schools organised as part of the elementary system, and part time continuation classes, there is a clear gulf of principle. If the latter policy is adopted, vested interests will inevitably be created, which will make it difficult at a later date to recur to the former; if the former, then effort should not be wasted on creating institutions appropriate only to the latter. In the words of the Director of Education for the County of Gloucestershire: "When secondary education becomes free and compulsory up to the age of sixteen, as no doubt it will within such time as Authorities in their schemes should survey and provide for, then inferior substitutes (central schools and continuation schools) will have to be replaced; and either they will be scrapped and there will be great waste, or they will be absorbed into the new system, which henceforth will be handicapped by all the disadvantages of unsuitable buildings designed for another purpose, and not easily adaptable to a new one, and staffs of teachers selected for entirely different work and trained under conditions foreign to those of the secondary school."[6]

This forecast may be thought to be unduly optimistic, but its emphasis on the need of planning development with a definite object is sound. Whether the policy, already adopted by the London County

[6] Gloucestershire Education Committee, Interim Scheme in Respect of Secondary Education (January 31, 1920).

Council, of fixing a comparatively low standard of secondary school accommodation, and providing for other children by means of central schools and continuation classes is wise or not, clearly, once it is generally adopted, it will be difficult to reverse it. It is of paramount importance, therefore, that, in planning educational policy under the Act of 1918, an attempt should be made to take into account the longer future. We have to consider, not merely the immediate necessity of increasing the provision for secondary education, but the relations which, when schemes have had time to work themselves out, it is desired to establish between the primary and the secondary school.

## II

## SECONDARY EDUCATION FOR ALL

The principal views which have been taken of the place of the secondary school in the educational system are three. They may be called respectively the doctrine of the two systems or of separation, the doctrine of selection or of the educational ladder, and the doctrine of the single system. From the time when in 1839 the Committee of the Privy Council expressed the wish that elementary instruction should be kept in close touch with "the condition of workmen and servants" down almost to the end of the nineteenth century, public education in England developed as a class institution. "Elementary" education was the education of "the independent poor," established for them by the governing classes for religious, economic, and humanitarian reasons. Secondary education was the education of the well-to-do. The most obvious fact about the system was that the division between them was based, not on educational, but on social and economic, considerations. Educational differentiation began not after the primary school, but before it, and was related not to the future of the children but to the position of the parents. Secondary education was not built upon primary education, but was parallel to it. They were, in short, not different stages

in a single system, but different systems of education designed for classes whose capacities, needs, and social functions were supposed to be necessarily so different as to make a unified system at once impracticable and disastrous.

This conception of secondary education has long been abandoned by such educationalists (if any) as ever held it, and has ceased for nearly a generation to be the dominant force in public policy. But, in spite of the progress made in the last twenty years, its evil legacy is not yet exhausted. When after 1902 the nation began to set in earnest about the creation of a system of public secondary education, the character of "elementary" education was already fixed. It was to last till thirteen or fourteen. It was to be the education of children the vast majority of whom would receive no further education after they had ended it. It was, in short, not preparatory education, but working-class education.

Into these facts and the ideas on which they were based the new secondary education had to be, or at any rate in fact was, fitted. It was not considered whether, once a public system of secondary education were established, it would not be desirable to modify primary education in such a way as to make it preparatory to adolescent education beginning between eleven and twelve. It was not asked whether, if secondary education was good for some children, it would not be good for all. It was not attempted, in short, to make secondary and primary education successive stages instead of parallel systems. Nor, had such ideas been mooted, is it probable that they would have met with anything but derision, or that, had they commanded support, it would have been possible in the circumstances of the time to give effect to them. What was actually done was to establish an empirical compromise between the traditional conception of "elementary" education as the education of a class and the new demand that opportunities of full-time secondary education should be given to some of the more intelligent of the children attending the primary schools. The practical form which that compromise assumed was

a system of selection. The existing assumptions and organisation of "elementary" education were retained intact. But, by means of scholarships, free places, and maintenance allowances, bridges were thrown—how slender they still are has been shown in a preceding chapter—between it and the newly-organised system of public secondary education.

Selection for higher education by means of scholarships has been for the last twenty years the accepted policy of English education. The number of children passing by means of them from primary to secondary schools, though still small, has steadily increased, and if the schemes prepared by Local Education Authorities under the Act of 1918 are carried out, it will increase more rapidly in the future. But the policy of selection may obviously be given two opposite interpretations. If, as is hinted might be the case by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, the effect of it were that seventy-five per cent. of the children in primary schools passed to secondary schools, then selection would be hardly distinguishable from universal provision. When it results, as in certain areas to-day, in the pupils in the secondary schools amounting to less than two per 1,000 of the population, selection is hardly distinguishable from no provision at all.

One may, in fact, proceed either by inclusion or by exclusion, either by endeavouring to ensure that all children other than the obviously subnormal shall pass at adolescence to some form of secondary school, or by treating full-time secondary education as an exceptional privilege to be reserved for children of exceptional capacity. The plan of development suggested in the schemes of West Ham and of Gloucestershire would lead in the first direction. The scheme of the London County Council, or the views expressed in the scheme of the Education Authority of Salford that a "secondary school is intended for those who will prepare for some of the more responsible positions in after life," or the opposition of the Federation of British Industries to a wide diffusion of higher

education on the ground that it would "unfit children for the employments they eventually enter," or the proposal of the Select Committee on Educational Expenditure to restrict the access to secondary schools by raising their fees, would lead to the second.[7]

On the one view, primary and secondary education are stages in a single process through which all normal children ought to pass, because all, though in different degrees, will respond to them; the measure of the success of both is the heightened human capacity which they evoke. On the other view, the primary and secondary school represent, not stages of education, but systems of education. There must be facilities for passing from the one to the other, for the brighter children of the working classes are needed to supply the educated *personnel*—the "intellectual proletariat"—which modern industry, in its higher ranges, requires. But equality of educational provision up to sixteen is impossible of attainment and mischievous could it be attained. Industry needs cannon fodder as well as staff officers, and it is not desirable that the minds of the rank and file, even if capable of development (which the Federation of British Industries doubt), should be unduly developed. When the cream of intelligence has been skimmed off by scholarships, the mass of children must pass at fourteen to the factory with such part-time continued education (if any) as the exigencies of industry may permit.

The choice between these two views is the most momentous issue of educational policy before the nation. As far as the workers of the country are concerned, their decision has already been made. They demand neither

[7] Seventh Report from the Select Committee on National Expenditure (December, 1920), p. xiv. The committee appears to have been much shocked by the fact that "the fees charged for secondary and higher education are very low, in fact far below the cost of the education which is afforded." It apparently did not occur to it to inquire whether in any country, at any time, the policy of selling higher education at cost price (or, as the committee would presumably prefer, at a profit) has ever been adopted, and if not, why not?

central schools, nor part-time continuation schools, nor any other of the makeshifts by which it is sought to mitigate in detail the evil results of that organisation on lines of class which is the tragedy of English education, while maintaining it in principle and in substance. They demand full-time secondary education for all normal children up to the age of sixteen. So to increase the provision for secondary education as to enable the majority of children to pass to a secondary school at eleven will obviously require an effort extending over a period of several years. But the measures taken now will depend upon the goal which is envisaged, and in insisting that the aim of development must be a universal system of secondary education up to sixteen, in insisting that it shall be, in the words of the Director of Education for Gloucestershire, "a scheme which shall ultimately bring a complete secondary education within reach of everybody," the Labour Party is recommending nothing either extravagant or impracticable. It has on its side the expert opinion of many teachers, of educationalists, of a considerable number of those who are engaged in the practical work of educational administration. Its policy is framed not for the advantage of any single class, but to develop the human resources of the whole community.

The case for a development of education on these lines advanced by the educationalist is simple. From his point of view the intrusion into educational organisation of the vulgarities of the class system is an irrelevance as mischievous in effect as it is odious in conception. "Secondary education of the best kind," states the Executive Committee of the Incorporated Association of Assistant Masters in Secondary Schools, "should be open to all; and the time is long overdue for the removal of any restriction of opportunity for secondary education through accident of birth, social position, or financial means. The removal of such restrictions we regard as an act of social justice."[8] What the educationalist means by "secondary" and "primary" education has

[8] Resolution of March 14, 1921.

nothing to do with class stratification and the curious educational ritual which in England is annexed to it. It is adolescent education, and education which is preparatory to adolescent education. The capital message of educational theory, he would argue, is that the success of education is proportionate to the degree to which it is related to the facts of natural development. Hence it must be envisaged as a whole. The crucial point in development is adolescence. Hence the years from eleven should not be the fag-end of the primary school course, but a period marked by new beginnings in education as in life. The foundations for specialisation must be laid by a sound general education. Hence, general education should last to sixteen, and children should not be encouraged to specialise, still less to enter industry, before it. The younger the children the more precarious and unreliable the classification of them according to the test of examination. Hence all classifications made (as in examinations for free places) should be purely provisional; no child should be excluded from a secondary education as a result of them; all children should pass as a matter of course at the appropriate age to the secondary school, just as all children have passed up to that age through the primary school. The educationalist, in short, looks forward with Professor Adams to developments under which, "in twenty years' time, there would be one system of free education from the cradle to the grave, or for as long as we should desire it."[9] He urges, in the words of Professor Nunn's report to the Education Reform Council, that "though schemes of education necessarily take account of varying social conditions, their essential lines must follow the true lines of growth of human nature," that "the present break at fourteen should not be regarded as an unalterable feature of the social system," and that "the years from twelve to fourteen must be treated as part of a continuous course that in no case reaches its end earlier than the age of sixteen."[10]

[9] Lecture by Professor Adams, reported in *The Times Educational Supplement*, November 12, 1921.

[10] Education Reform, 1917. Report of Committee E.

These general considerations are reinforced by the evidence resulting from the development of more exact measurements of intelligence than could be applied till recently. It is sometimes objected by persons without practical experience of educational questions that a wide extension of secondary education up to sixteen is not desirable, because all but a small minority of children —usually, it may be observed, a minority not in excess of the number being educated at the time when the objection is advanced—are not, as it is said, "worth educating." It is not necessary to point out that those who use this argument do not, apparently, regard it as applicable to themselves or to their own children, whose absolute "worth" is assumed to be self-evident, or to emphasise the obvious fallacy of assuming that the value of education can be reduced to the terms of a profit and loss account, or to inquire into the precise nature of the calculus which decides that the child of, say, a mine owner is "worth educating" up to twenty-one and that of a miner not "worth educating" beyond fourteen, or to ask why, if it is worth while for the community to provide full-time education for a child up to fourteen, the age when it leaves the primary school, it suddenly ceases to be worth whole for it to provide any further education whatever when that momentous date is passed. To those who ask, "What use is secondary education to a working-class child?" the most obvious answer would appear to be to ask, "What use" (since that is the formula favoured) their education has been to them?

In reality, however, absurd as this view is on other grounds, the whole tendency of recent educational investigation has been still further to discredit it by emphasising the immense mass, not only of average talent—and average talent is worth cultivating—but of exceptional talent, which is sterilised for lack of educational opportunities. It is true, of course, that not all children respond equally to the same methods and curriculum. Equality of educational provision is not identity of educational provision, and it is important that there should be the greatest possible diversity of type among

secondary schools. But the theory that money spent on developing secondary education is likely to be wasted because the majority of children are not "capable of profiting" by it finds no confirmation among educationalists or administrators. We have already referred to the statement of the Departmental Committee that "practically all children, except the subnormal, are intellectually capable of profiting by full-time instruction up to sixteen or beyond." Inspectors familiar with primary schools are stated to regard twenty-five per cent. of the children as above normal, fifty per cent. as normal, and twenty-five per cent. as below normal. Such estimates are obviously very rough. But they show at any rate that there is a widespread opinion among persons of experience that a great deal of educable capacity misses education. Since the entrants to public secondary schools from primary schools formed in 1918-19 only 9.4 per cent. of the children between ten and eleven in the latter, it is evident that not only are we failing to cultivate the intelligence of *all* the children described as normal, but we are actually failing to provide higher education for almost two-thirds of those who are of exceptional intelligence!

The evidence on this point is overwhelming. "The results of nine years' experience in examining elementary school candidates for scholarships to secondary schools," states the Director of Education of a county borough, "has led me to the conclusion that between forty and fifty per cent. of the candidates would undoubtedly profit well by a course of secondary school education." Greater precision has been given to these estimates by the investigations of Mr. Burt,[11] the distinguished psychologist employed by the London County Council, who recently made a survey of the educational abilities of all the children—in number 31,965—in the schools of a single London borough. The course followed was to

[11] London County Council Report by the education officer submitting three preliminary memoranda by Mr. Cyril Burt, M.A., psychologist, on The Distribution and Relations of Educational Abilities (1917).

ascertain the degree of correspondence or deviation between age and attainment, children who entered standard I. at the age of seven and advanced a standard a year till they reached standard VII. in their last school year being treated as normal, children whose ability corresponded to standards higher or lower than this being treated respectively as backward or advanced. The result of the investigations was to show that, of 19,645 children between eight and thirteen, attainments were on a level of age in the case of thirty-seven per cent., were one year in advance of age in the case of twenty-five per cent., and in the case of 6.4 per cent. were more than one year in advance of age. These results, it must be remembered, were obtained after the brightest children in the later years had already passed out of the primary schools by means of scholarships. London has a relatively efficient scholarship system. But that, even in spite of it, a very large proportion of able children fail to attain post-primary education is shown by the fact that the standard required for success in it is estimated to be that of a child two and a half years in advance of the normal at the age of ten. The children in the age group ten to eleven in the schools which Mr. Burt investigated numbered 3,319, of whom 1,060 or thirty-two per cent. were classed as supernormal, and 1,196 or thirty-six per cent. as normal. If, therefore, higher education were provided for all children of supernormal attainments, nearly a third of the children of ten to eleven in the primary schools ought to receive it; if for all normal children as well, then the proportion receiving it should have been between two-thirds and three-quarters. In reality the proportion of children of the age group ten and eleven who passed with scholarships to secondary schools was ten per cent.

It would be a mistake, no doubt, to lay too much weight on the precise degree of our failure to cultivate ability suggested by quantitative estimates of this kind. The results of statistical investigations depend partly on the definitions from which they start, and it is possible that the proportion of "normal" and "supernormal"

children should be written down from two-thirds to one-half. Since either figure is greatly in excess of the percentage of children passing to any form of higher education, the lower estimate has the same significance for immediate educational policy as the higher. Evidence such as this is a striking testimony to the educational wisdom of the Labour Party's demand for free and universal secondary education. It suggests that, so far from there being any foundation for the fear that money may be wasted in providing higher education for children who cannot make good use of it, the actual fact is that not only money, but brains and character, are being wasted through our failure to provide it for those who can.

And, of course, there are considerations of social well-being and efficiency to be taken into account, which are not less material than those of educational expediency. The evils which flow from the neglect of the community in the past to make any provision for the needs of the adolescent are a commonplace, and we need not re-tell at length a miserable and thrice-told tale. From the Poor Law Commission of 1908 to the Report on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War which appeared in 1917, one official inquiry after another has insisted that, in abdicating its responsibilities at fourteen, the community is not only condemning many hundred thousand boys and girls to lose half the benefit of their previous training, by withdrawing them from the influence of education at the moment when its fruits are beginning to be garnered, but is exposing them, alert, plastic, still sensitive and unformed, to a physical and moral strain which only the strongest, or least impressionable, or most fortunate, can hope to withstand. If the educationalists tell us that our present arrangements sin against every canon of education, the investigators of social conditions repeat with no uncertain voice that the fruits of "this educational and moral chaos" have been disaster.[12]

[12] The official documents on this subject are numerous. The most important are the Majority and Minority Reports of the Poor Law

What is a less noticed, but ultimately a not less important, fact is that in starving the education of the adolescent the nation is sterilising itself. If all that a community demands is orderliness, docility, a capacity to understand orders and obey them, then it may be satisfied with a primary education which ends at fourteen, or which is followed by some small degree of vocational training. But in reality, though that conception of education might be natural enough in the seventies of the last century, no lengthy argument is needed to show that it is inadequate to-day. What society requires for the sake both of economic efficiency and of social amenity, is educated intelligence. But it cannot obtain educated intelligence unless it will bear the cost of educating it. And the result of its failure to educate it is that it arrests the flow of intelligence midway in its career. By a singular irony, at the very moment when it is notorious that some industries are congested with youths who have been thrown prematurely into industry, the teaching profession, though no longer actually, as it was a few years ago, a "decaying trade," is starved of the recruits who might have entered it. In the impressive words of the Birmingham Education Authority : "When it is remembered that industry and commerce are calling for a great increase in the number of highly trained workers . . ., when it is realised that all the secondary schools in the country could not furnish the number of teachers required in the immediate future by the various local authorities, and when it is recalled how great are the necessities of the community for increased education in view of the complexity of the problems now to be faced, it cannot be regarded as other than disastrous that the Authority is unable to provide the necessary facilities for training for

Commission (1909), the Report of Mr. Cyril Jackson on Boy Labour to that commission, the Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education on Attendance, Compulsory or Otherwise, at Continuation Schools (1909, Cmd. 4757), the Report of the Select Committee on Juvenile Education in Relation to Employment after the War (1917, Cmd. 8512), the Report of the Ministry of Reconstruction on Juvenile Employment during the War and After (1918).

those of proved ability keenly desirous of taking advantage thereof."

Nor must it be forgotten that the intelligence which the community can command will rise with every widening of the area of selection and fall as that area contracts. Granted that capacity and incapacity—to use colourless words—tend to reproduce themselves, there seems little reason to suppose that nature is so obliging as to follow the lines of the social and educational divisions which exist to-day, and hardly more for suggesting that the latter, depending, as they do, on economic conditions and legal institutions, have any close correlation with natural differences of capacity. Ability, it appears, is probably dispersed more or less at random over the whole population, in the sense that its distribution follows laws of its own which have little discernible relation to differences of class or income. The potential scientist or poet or inventor or statesman is as likely to be born in West Ham as in Westminster. He is as likely to be born there, but he is most unlikely to be developed there. For, on the one hand, special capacity is neither discovered nor cultivated without an education extending beyond the primary school, nor, on the other hand, is it likely without such an education to find the opening best suited to it, since all the professions and an increasing number of branches of industry are recruited from those who had a full-time education to, at least, sixteen. Hence the direction of ability into the channels in which it can best serve the community depends upon the existence of such abundant opportunities of higher education that every child can be fitted to the service which it can best render. "There is in the elementary schools," states a Director of Education, "a vast reservoir of intellectual power in pupils of conspicuous ability. But, owing to the absence of an adequate system of maintenance grants, the wrong sluice is opened, and the pupils flow out into industrial careers of a mechanical nature. . . . The highest output of the nation . . . . demands the best brains which the country can produce. And yet head teachers of elementary

schools aver that, year by year, boys of exceptional promise, who are potentially valuable assets to the community, are lost in the vast industrial whirlpool."

In so far as such statements are true—and evidence to the same effect could easily be multiplied—the fear that a wide extension of secondary education may "lower the standard" is obviously groundless. It is notorious, indeed, that at the present time some children who receive secondary education are, judged by accepted standards, less able than some of those who are excluded from it : we need mention only the well-known fact that some of those who have failed in the examination for free places are subsequently admitted as fee-paying pupils, while others, who may have succeeded in the examination, enter industry because their parents cannot afford to dispense with their earnings. Apart from all other considerations, the wider the field the better the candidates. We have not such a plethora of ability in the wealthier classes that we can afford to starve the talent of the mass of the people. And the field can only be a wide one if the majority of children receive a secondary education. As long as so small a proportion as at present of the children leaving the primary schools pass to secondary schools, the community must continue to draw for its leadership upon an insignificant fraction of the whole population.

## III

## THE REACTION ON THE PRIMARY SCHOOL

We are not directly concerned in this book with primary education, but we may point out that not the least of the advantages of the Labour Party's proposal to aim at an organisation of education, under which ultimately all normal children will pass at eleven + to a post-primary course lasting to sixteen, appears likely to be the reaction of such a change upon the primary school. The arrangement under which children remain in the primary school till the age of fourteen was natural as long as "elementary" education was regarded,

as in the nineteenth century, as the discipline of a class for whom the very idea of providing higher education was an absurdity. But once that odious doctrine is discarded, once it is recognised that the normal thing will be for the child of working-class parents to pass to some form of higher education, the primary school will be free, as it has not been free in the past, to undertake its proper work of providing preparatory education for children who will begin their secondary education about eleven. It will cease, in short, to be an "elementary" and will become a "preparatory" school.

What this will mean in practice will naturally vary from school to school. But its general effect will be that the transition in education, as the transition in the physical and mental development of the children, will take place with adolescence—somewhere between the ages of eleven and twelve. The work of the secondary school will begin at a moment when the child itself is conscious of new needs and new powers; the work of the primary school will be lightened and simplified because it will no longer be faced with the problem of providing education suitable to children who have passed out of the stage of growth of most of its pupils. Such a revision of the school course—the transference from primary to secondary school at eleven + taking the place of elementary education up to fourteen, followed by a plunge into the industrial whirlpool—is only possible if it is recognised that, as the Labour Party proposes, all normal children are to receive a secondary education—that in the words of *The Times*, "The doctrine of universal secondary education does away with that distinction (between elementary and secondary education) and gives every child the education best suited for the development of his or her personality." It is urged by educationalists—we need only refer to the already quoted words of Professor Nunn. It will commend itself to teachers, who are only too conscious of the waste of capacity arising from the present arrangements. It is already envisaged by administrators and Local Education Authorities.

It is significant, indeed, of the change which has overtaken educational opinion in the course of the last fifteen years—a change, the result partly of the teaching of educationalists, partly of the very development of public secondary education which we have already described—that at the present time there seems to be something like a consensus of opinion that the time has come for a radical regrading of primary and post-primary education. "It is necessary to distinguish," states an experienced official, "between the elementary school as it has been understood in the past and elementary education. The elementary school has kept its pupils till about fourteen years of age, but for the normal boy elementary education stops at about eleven. Beyond that stage the pupil, on account of the great physical changes through which he passes, becomes in reality a new being with new powers, new desires, and a new outlook. *It is a mistake to continue after this stage the educational methods that are suitable for the preceding stage.* It would be a great gain if it were definitely recognised that elementary education stops at eleven." "It seems to be very generally agreed," writes a correspondent in *The Times Educational Supplement*,[13] "that the existing rigid division of schools into elementary, secondary, and higher is both wasteful and lacking in efficiency by reason of the overlapping that it causes of expenditure and effort—that it is largely a concession to social prejudices and opposed to the spirit of the age. It is further widely agreed that the present class denomination 'elementary' should be abolished, and that schools should be broadly divided into :—

(i) Primary, for all children up to eleven to twelve. Subdivided into :—
  (*a*) Nursery and infant for all children up to the ages of seven to eight.
  (*b*) Preparatory for all children between the ages of eight and twelve.
(ii) Secondary, for boys and girls between the ages of twelve and sixteen to eighteen; and

[13] October 8, 1921.

(iii) Higher, providing education of a University type."

Such criticisms by educationalists on the traditional system of "elementary" education up to fourteen could be multiplied. What is even more significant is that all over the country schemes are being prepared for turning the work of the upper standards of "elementary" schools into intermediate education. In the words of the scheme of the Kent Education Authority : "By general consent the normal age of transition from the strictly elementary to the advanced forms of education is eleven or thereabouts. Reform lies in adopting the corollaries that follow from this. . . . It is no longer a question of determining whether some or all should enjoy the benefits of a secondary education. The deciding factor is whether the special aptitude of a group of pupils will enable them to profit most by this course or by that." The same point is put with even greater emphasis by the Essex Education Committee. "The committee proposes," they state, "gradually to transform the existing elementary school system into a preparatory or true primary school system, and to arrange that the normal elementary school pupil shall leave the elementary school at the end of the school year in which he attains the age of eleven years, and pass on to a school giving secondary or higher education, where, at a critical point in his school life, he will have a new outlook, a different atmosphere, fresh interests, and a curriculum specially adapted to his needs."

Nor, once the object of such a reorganisation is made clear, is it to be feared that parents will not welcome it. True, many children to-day, by the eagerness with which they leave school, and some parents, by their comments upon it, seem to be, if not a lion, at least a dormouse in the path of the reformer. But consider what this attitude means. Is not their scepticism about education—a result, not of educational theories, but of practical experience—directed against precisely those features of our present system about which the educationalist himself is most sceptical? Is not the burden of the parent's

complaint that between twelve and fourteen the child is marking time in the primary school; that the child himself (as he well may be) is sick of schooling; and that it is no good raising the school age because, as it is, the later years are largely wasted? If he desires his child to receive a secondary education, is it not notorious that he finds it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to secure its admission to an already overcrowded secondary school, still more difficult to secure a free place, most difficult of all to get a maintenance allowance which will keep it at school to the age of sixteen without causing its young brothers and sisters to be stinted? And is not all this a practical comment upon our educational system which is much to the point, from which its organisers should learn, and from which, instead of railing at popular apathy, they should start in devising their reforms? Why, the child's desire to be making a new start, and the parents' dissatisfaction with the later stages of the "elementary" school, so far from being unreasonable, touch the very points which have evoked the criticism of educationalists. If, with those defects what they are, parents and children think that they do not care about education, that is a tribute to their good sense, for, in these respects, the education offered them has not been of a kind which any sensible person should care about.

The truth is that, if education is to be loved, and not merely tolerated, it must be seen, at any rate in outline, as an intelligible whole. It must give a sense of movement, of growth, of continuous progress towards expanding horizons. Too often, at present, public education does none of these things. Too often it is in the nature of a course which must be covered because the law requires it, but which ends in a *cul de sac*, and leaves the child eager to start its real life elsewhere, when school is happily over. Too often, in fact, the public school is neither venerable like a college, nor popular like a club, but merely indispensable like a pillar box. And if we are to overcome such indifference when it exists, we can only overcome it by relating the organisation of our educational system to the natural development of the

child, so that at eleven to twelve, when his primary school course is over, his parents know that he is going, not to mark time till the age for leaving school arrives, but to make a momentous departure and to enter on the real business of higher education which will carry him forward till he knows himself and what he is fit for. If we are to make education appeal with force we must take care that the arrangement of education shall make evident what education is for—that it is not a mere discipline or ritual, but that it is vitally connected with the life and growth of those who are being educated. We must give meaning to our primary education by making plain to what it leads, and substance to our secondary education by supplying it, not with a trickle of "bright" children, but with the great mass of the nation's youth to help forward in their growth to manhood. We must, in short, work for a new connection of primary—no longer "elementary"—with secondary education; a new educational synthesis planned to embrace the whole period of growth from five to sixteen.

## IV

## SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

What we propose, then, is that the nation should take as the objective of its educational effort the creation of a system of universal secondary education extending from the age of eleven to that of sixteen. Nothing less than this will satisfy the demands of the workers of the country; nothing less is urged by the most eminent educationalists; nothing less will enable the community to make the best use of its human resources, the development of which is at once the goal of economic effort and the source of all wealth which is produced. We are aware, of course, that such a programme can be realised only over a period of years. But it is the end towards which policy should be directed, and, in the meantime, the reforms of the transition period should be planned with that end in view.

Were these proposals carried out, primary and secondary education, instead of forming, as now, two separate systems with frail handrails thrown from one to the other, would form two parts of a harmonious whole. Secondary schools would be various in type, and not all children would pass to the same kind of school. But all children would pass to *some* kind of secondary school and would spend the critical years from eleven to sixteen under the invigorating influence of a progressive course of full time education.

In the following chapters we proceed to consider in greater detail some of the questions raised by this programme.

## CHAPTER IV

# THE FREEING OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

THE development of post-primary education on the lines suggested in the preceding chapter will involve (1) the removal of the financial obstacles which at present prevent parents from sending their children to a secondary school and keeping them there as long as is desirable, (2) the provision of sufficient school places and the recruitment of the necessary number of teachers. Neither of these measures can produce their full effect immediately. A movement in the direction of both can, and should, be made at once. We proceed in this chapter to consider them.

## I

## THE EXISTING SYSTEM

Unlike secondary education in the United States and some of the British Dominions, education in public secondary schools in England is not free, but is conditional, with the qualifications described below, on the payment of fees. Subject to the provision that they must be approved as suitable by the Board of Education, the fees charged are in the discretion of the school authorities. Of the total income of grant-aided secondary schools in England in 1912-13 roughly forty-one per cent., £1,100,245 out of £2,668,661, was derived from fees.[1] The last volume of educational statistics, in which schools are classified according to the fees charged to pupils of twelve years of age, shows that in

[1] Report of Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, 1920 (Cmd. 968), p. 12.

1913-14, out of 1,025 schools 6 charged no fee, while of the remainder 242 charged from one to five guineas a year, 623 from five to ten, 107 from ten to fifteen, and 47 over fifteen guineas. Since that date fees have been widely, if not universally, revised.[2] The average fee per pupil (free and fee paying) in attendance appears to have been about £5 10s. in English schools in 1912, which probably meant that for fee-paying pupils only it might be put at that date at something between eight and ten guineas. At the present day the corresponding figure is probably something between eleven and thirteen guineas. It should be observed that even the fee-paying pupil does not pay the full cost of his education ; to the extent of rather more than half of it he is subsidised out of public funds.

If secondary education were obtainable only on these conditions it would have remained to the present day inaccessible to almost all working-class children, since their parents would have had to pay an annual fee of anything from one to ten guineas for each child receiving it. As it is, the financial obstacles in the way of secondary education remain, as we show later, serious. But a scholarship system, in one form or another, is as old as secondary education itself. Apart from endowments, the Commission on Secondary Education found that as long ago as 1895 some 2,500 scholarships tenable at secondary schools were provided by Local Authorities. By 1900 they had risen to between 5,000 and 5,500. By 1906 they numbered approximately 24,000, and were held by nearly a quarter of the children. It is only, however, since 1907 that the provision of a certain minimum of free places has been obligatory upon all secondary schools receiving grants from the State. By Article 20 of the Regulations of that year, the Board required that at the beginning of each school year all schools charging fees

[2] Between 1913-14 and the end of 1919 some 206 schools would have appeared to have raised their minimum fees, and some 242 their maximum fees. In the case of the former 66 raised it less than one guinea, 61 by one and under two guineas, 40 by two and under three guineas, and only 39 by three guineas or more.

should, as a condition of eligibility for grant, offer a percentage of free places to candidates for admission entering from the public elementary schools, a percentage which should normally be fixed at twenty-five, but which might be reduced in the case of any particular school at the discretion of the Board. According to the most recent returns it would appear that some 127 schools are permitted to offer less than the full minimum. The remainder are required to offer not less than twenty-five per cent., and in practice some among them offer considerably more. It should be observed that both the character and the value of free places vary. They may be provided either by Local Education Authorities, or by the school governors, or by other endowments. They may cover either the remission of fees only, *i.e.*, free tuition, or free tuition *plus* the cost of books, travelling and other incidental expenses, or free tuition *plus* a grant of money for the purposes of maintenance.

The system thus developed has been the principal means of bridging the gulf between primary and secondary education. In 1919-20, 82,630 children out of 282,005 in the grant-aided secondary schools of England held free places. As far, therefore, as one-third of the children in public secondary schools are concerned, free secondary education has already been established. The objections to the arrangement advanced by some schools and Local Education Authorities when it was first introduced appear virtually to have ceased. By common consent the free-place system has both brought secondary education within reach of thousands of children to whom otherwise it would have been inaccessible, and raised the intellectual standard of the schools by irrigating them with a stream of talent upon which otherwise they could not have drawn.[3]

[3] For the figures see Report of the Board of Education for the year 1919-20, and Report of Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, App. I, Table B. The history and working of the system is discussed *ibid.*, pp. 2-7, and in the Report of the Committee of the British Association upon The Effects of the Free-Place System upon Secondary Education, 1918.

It has done this so far as it goes. But it does not go far; and if the figure of 82,630 free-placers seems imposing, it must be remembered that, compared either with the demand for secondary education or the number of children "capable of profiting," it is insignificant. The important comparison is not between the number of free-placers and the number of pupils in the secondary schools, but between the number of free-placers and the number of children in the primary schools from whom the secondary schools are recruited. Judged by that standard, the number of free places is lamentably deficient. The children admitted to secondary schools without payment of fees in 1918-19 amounted to 3.6 per cent. of the children between ten and eleven in the primary schools of England and 6.02 per cent. of those of the same age in the primary schools of Wales, which means in effect that at that age a child in England had three chances in 100 of getting a free secondary education. So grave is the deficiency of free places compared with the expressed demand, that, at the beginning of 1919-20, actually 8,780 children in England and 2,354 in Wales were refused admission to secondary schools, though they had reached the required intellectual standard, and though the school authorities, had free places existed, would have been prepared to receive them.[4]

The effect of this shortage has been, in many places, to give a quite different significance to the free place from that which was originally contemplated. When, in 1907, Article 20 was first introduced into the Regulations, its object was to ensure that secondary schools aided by grants should be made fully accessible to the children of all classes, and the intention of the Board was that the standard of admission for free-place children should be the same as for fee-paying children of the same age. What has actually happened is that, in many areas, owing to the shortage of provision, the competition for free places is such that

[4] Report of Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, App. I, Table D. It should be noted that these figures are only approximate (see note at end of Table D in the Report).

they can be obtained only by children who reach what is, in effect, a scholarship standard, and not by all of them. The London County Council, for example, throws overboard the spirit and purpose of the free-place system, and declares in its scheme that "it has felt itself justified in applying a test for free higher education different from the ordinary admission test."[5] As long as the number of free places is so gravely inadequate to the demand as it is at present, it may be almost impossible for a Local Education Authority to refrain from slipping into this policy. But obviously, in so far as it is adopted, it defeats the object for which Article 20 was introduced into the Regulations. So far from equalising opportunities of higher education, it creates one standard for the children of well-to-do parents, and another and higher standard for the children of parents of small means.

## II

## THE ABOLITION OF FEES

In view of facts such as these there can be no doubt that, as long as fees continue to be charged in public secondary schools, there should be a large and immediate increase in the number of free places. The figure proposed by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places was forty per cent., instead of, as now, twenty-five per cent., which, on the basis of the present secondary school population, would result in increasing the number of free-place pupils in England from 82,630 to 112,800, and (since the required number is likely, as now, to be somewhat exceeded in practice) to something more. But evidently such a figure, like the original figure of twenty-five per cent., is both arbitrary and provisional. It cannot seriously be argued that out of the 6,000,000 children in the public elementary schools only 112,000, or even 200,000, are "capable of profiting" by secondary education.

The truth is that the free-place system, though useful as making a breach, if a small one, in the walls of

[5] Scheme of the London County Council, p. 81.

educational exclusiveness, was really the product of an age in which secondary education was regarded as an exceptional privilege to be strained through a sieve, and reserved, so far as the mass of the people were concerned, for children of exceptional capacity. The Labour Movement cannot accept that position, and it has long been abandoned by educationalists. We agree, therefore, with the Departmental Committee that the goal to be aimed at is not merely an increase in the number of free places, but free secondary education, and that, in the meanwhile, all steps for the immediate improvement of the financial basis of our secondary system, particularly in the matter of scholarships and free places, should be taken with that end in view.

In America and in some British Dominions free secondary education already exists. It has long been demanded by the British Labour Movement. When, as President of the Board of Education, Mr. McKenna explained the proposals as to free places to the House of Commons, he stated that he trusted that in secondary schools provided by Local Authorities all places would be free.[6] But in spite of that declaration free secondary education has not yet proceeded far in this country. In 1913-14 six grant-aided secondary schools charged no fees, and since that time, in particular areas, further steps have been taken in the same direction. Bradford established free secondary education during the war. The County of Glamorganshire has done the same. The scheme of the Durham County Council provides that from September, 1920, forty-five per cent. of the vacancies shall be awarded as free places, from September, 1921, sixty per cent., from September, 1922, eighty per cent., and from September, 1923, 100 per cent. Clearly, if the proposal for something like universal secondary education from eleven to sixteen, advanced in the preceding chapter, is accepted, the abolition of fees is a necessary corollary. But secondary education can be

[6] Hansard, May 15, 1907: "The schools might have as many more free places as they liked, *and where the schools were provided by the local education authority he trusted they would all be free.*"

made free before it becomes universal, and, even though it should continue to be the case that only a minority of children pass through the secondary schools, the arguments for free secondary education, as the Departmental Committee points out, remain, nevertheless, extremely strong. No form of education has ever been able to "pay for itself" nor do sensible persons expect that it should.[7] Primary education for which fees were originally charged has been predominantly free since 1891, and there is no question of charging fees for the part-time education up to eighteen contemplated by the Act of 1918. It may, indeed, be replied that these forms of education are compulsory, but the answer is largely irrelevant. The ground of making them compulsory was the same as the ground for making them free, that it was regarded as in the interests of the community that children and young persons should receive them. The ground for freeing secondary education is the same, and though it would be illogical to make it compulsory without making it free, there is nothing unreasonable in making it free without at the same time making it compulsory.

Even if the argument from the analogy of other forms of education be rejected, both the educational and the practical reasons for free secondary education remain overwhelming. On the one hand, the present arrangement, a compromise between the 1870 conception of "elementary" education as designed for a special class and the modern view of it as preparatory education, emphasises precisely that divorce between primary and secondary education which it is the object of all reformers to abolish. By making the former free and charging fees for the latter, it suggests that one is a necessity and the other a luxury. But, in reality, of course, that arbitrary division is either meaningless or mischievous. Education,

[7] The Select Committee on National Expenditure proposed that fees should be increased. But perhaps that body was not an exception to the statement made above. The education given in the so-called "public" schools is normally subsidised out of endowments.

if it is to be effective, is not a medley of unrelated systems, but a continuous process. To charge a fee before a child is permitted to enter for the second stage in its educational development is about as reasonable as it would be to impose a tax upon it merely because it had reached the age of eleven. On the other hand, from the point of view of the administrator, the present arrangement is hardly less unsatisfactory than from that of the educationalist. As long as free places are conceded only to a minority of children, it will remain necessary to use a competitive examination to discriminate between those who are to be admitted to them and those who are not. However skilfully it may be employed, and however it may be supplemented by provisions enabling children who have failed once to be admitted later, to decide the educational future of children by competitive examination held at the age of eleven—the age when, it is agreed, transference of children to the secondary school should normally take place—is not a satisfactory procedure.[8] Section 4 (4) of the Education Act of 1918, which provides that "children and young persons shall not be debarred from the benefit of any form of education by which they are capable of profiting through inability to pay fees," has increased the practical difficulties. As long as fees are charged, an education authority, in order to carry it out, must ascertain (*a*) how many children are "capable of profiting," (*b*) how many parents of such children are unable to pay fees. What it must *not* do, if it is to comply with the Act, is—what is often done now—to hold a competitive examination for a limited number of free places, since obviously, if that is done, some of the children who show by success in the examination that they are "capable of profiting" will be excluded because the free places are not sufficient. But, clearly, to discover who exactly are the parents unable to pay fees is not an easy task, and will become more difficult

[8] Even if fees are abolished selection by competitive examination or some analagous means will continue as long as the number of secondary school places is so gravely deficient as it is at present. But to abolish fees would obviously make it a less crucial factor in deciding a child's future.

with the inevitable and much to be desired increase in the number of children seeking admission to secondary schools. Once the principle of free secondary education is established, the difficulty of discriminating between those parents who can, and those who cannot, afford to pay fees vanishes.

In view of these advantages it is not surprising that the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places should have endorsed, with only one dissentient, the Labour Party's programme of free secondary education. Nor is the cost of abolishing fees such as to create any very great difficulty. In 1912-13, the last year for which figures were available, they contributed £1,100,245 out of a total revenue received by secondary schools of £2,663,661. Owing to increases which have taken place since that date, they may now perhaps be put at £2,000,000. That, therefore, would be the cost of freeing secondary education, on the basis of the present number attending the schools. If, as is to be hoped, the secondary school population increases, there will, of course, be a corresponding addition to it.

## III

## THE NECESSITY OF AN ADEQUATE SYSTEM OF MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCES

The abolition of fees is the first step towards the creation of a democratic system of secondary education. But the fact must be faced that it will not by itself remove the economic disabilities which at present thwart the development of the children of parents of small means. Quite apart from the charge made by the school or the Education Authority, a hardly less serious obstacle is offered by the difficulty of dispensing with the addition to the family income made by the earnings of a child when the age of compulsory attendance is past. In many cases, indeed, the word difficulty is inadequate. It is an impossibility. There are only too many districts to which the statement of the West Ham education

scheme is applicable. "Experience has shown that the average income in the districts is so low that without some financial assistance boys and girls could not usually be sent to, or kept at, the secondary and higher elementary schools."[9] "Shall I let my child accept the scholarship he has won at the secondary school? If I don't it is unfair on him. If I do, it is unfair on his younger brothers and sisters, who will go short of food"—such a dilemma is one which is within the experience of all who have practical contact with the working of the educational system to-day. It can only be overcome by a really adequate system of maintenance allowances.

Maintenance allowances, in one form or another, are as old as scholarships. But they do not appear in recent years to have kept pace with the developments of a system of free places. In the year 1911-12 the total expenditure of Local Education Authorities upon maintenance allowances was estimated to be £150,000. In 1918-19 it was £244,679[10] in England on account of children in grant-aided secondary schools and £8,470 in Wales. The total number of children holding them was 26,912 in England and 2,882 in Wales. In other words in England 37.2 per cent. of the children with free places and 10.9 per cent. of all the children in grant-aided secondary schools held maintenance allowances awarded by Local Education Authorities. In Wales the corresponding figures were 29 and 11.2 per cent.

It should be observed that there appears to be a remarkable discrepancy between the provision made in this respect by the county and that made by the county boroughs. In England the counties accounted in 1919 for 154,248 children, out of 254,720, in grant-aided secondary schools and the county boroughs for 100,472. The former, however, provided maintenance allowance

[9] Proposed West Ham Education Scheme (1920), pp. 13-14.

[10] In addition £17,442 was spent in England on maintenance allowances in junior technical and similar schools, and £23 in Wales. Of the sum of £244,679 mentioned above, £9,998 came, not from local education authorities, but from school foundations. The corresponding figure in Wales was £731.

for 20,428 out of the 26,912 children in receipt of them, and spent £185,913 in doing so; the latter provided for only 6,484 children at a cost of £58,766.

The practice of Local Education Authorities in providing maintenance allowances varies. There are areas in which both the remission of tuition fees and the provision of some sum towards maintenance is covered by the word "scholarship," and other areas in which the maintenance allowance is given separately. Some authorities, for example, Durham, "deal with necessitous cases as they arise." Others, like West Ham, hold that it is "difficult and undesirable to discriminate by inquiries between individual cases," and therefore provide a uniform maintenance allowance to all scholarship holders—in West Ham £15 for the years following the fourteenth birthday. Others, like London, have a scale of maintenance allowances varying according to the income and size of the family. In London, the further condition is proposed (if not actually at present in force) that "a higher intellectual standard (or other condition) should be required for the payments of maintenance beyond 'capacity to profit' by the education given." Hence from thirteen onwards maintenance allowances are, it is proposed, to be given only to "(i) those who reach a certain standard in the examinations higher than that required for free places, (ii) those who reach the standard for free places and undertake to become teachers." How prominent, indeed, the latter motive—the desire to recruit future teachers—has been in the development of a system of maintenance allowances is shown by the fact that in England actually nearly a third of the children in receipt of them in 1910—8,668 out of 26,912—were intending teachers.[11]

The recent regulations [12] as to the conditions upon

[11] Report of Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, App. I, Tables E i and E ii. Proposed Scheme for the County of Durham, p. 33. Proposed West Ham Education Scheme, pp. 13-14. Scheme of the London County Council, p. 38.

[12] Cmd. 425, The Higher Education (Maintenance Allowance Grant) Regulations, 1919.

which grants in aid of maintenance allowances will be available show that the importance of developing them is appreciated by the Board, and, if secondary education is to be made freely accessible to all children capable of making good use of it, it is clear that maintenance allowances must be extended on a scale far beyond any yet introduced, even by the most enlightened Education Authorities. They must be regarded neither as a charitable concession to exceptional misfortune, nor merely as a bounty paid on the manufacture of teachers, but as an essential element in the creation of a system of higher education which shall be accessible to all members of the community.

The scheme of the London County Council supplies an instructive example of precisely the kind of restrictions by which they should not be accompanied. It proposes in fact a double barrier ; first, because the child admitted to a free place must reach a higher standard than that demanded of the fee-paying child, second, because the child granted a maintenance allowance must reach a higher standard than the child awarded a free place. But as, by the Council's own declaration, the test of admission to a free place is "capacity to profit," it inevitably follows that maintenance allowances are to be refused to some children "capable of profiting" by secondary education, and that as a result such children will be deprived of it. The truth is that conditions of this kind are derived ultimately from the view that while the well-to-do child has a right to secondary education, whatever its capacity, the child of poor parents is to receive it only as a special favour and in virtue of displaying a degree of intellectual ability which no one dreams of demanding from his richer neighbour. Clearly, both on educational and on social grounds, such a view is indefensible. We are not prepared to say that the policy advocated by West Ham of paying maintenance allowances to all children holding free places should be universally adopted. But, if it is not, maintenance allowances must be based on the needs of the family, and no higher intellectual standard must

be demanded from children whose parents require them than from those whose parents do not.

But it is not enough merely to ensure that the grant of maintenance allowances is not accompanied by arbitrary restrictions such as those proposed in this scheme of the London County Council. It is necessary also greatly to increase their number, to make sure that they cover the expenses—books, travelling, stationery, and other items—incidental to secondary education, and to grade them in such a way that they may increase with age. It has been pointed out above that in 1918-19 over 8,000 children were unable to enter secondary schools because free places were not available for them. No similar statistics exist showing the number of children who, while qualifying for a free place, were unable to accept it through lack of maintenance allowances sufficient in number and amount. But it is within the knowledge of most persons of experience that a considerable number of parents are compelled to refuse free places because the earnings of the child are necessary to the family. Even at the present time it can hardly be supposed that the county boroughs of England, in providing maintenance allowances for 6,484 children, as they did in 1918, are smoothing difficulties from the path of *all* the children qualified and willing, if economic circumstances allowed, to take advantage of secondary education, or that a sum of £58,766 represents *all* that they could with advantage, and without imposing a crushing burden on the ratepayer, spend in doing so. In the future, at any rate, if the secondary schools are to be made freely accessible to all classes, it is essential that the sum should be substantially increased.

It is essential also that maintenance allowances should be graduated in such a way as to advance with the age of the children receiving them. Weak as public secondary education in England is throughout, it is weakest, as has often been pointed out, in its upper ranges. By general consent, one of the capital reforms needed is to retain at school a substantial proportion of the deplorably large number of children who at present leave

before the age of sixteen, and to do so without discouraging the child of poor parents from entering a secondary school in the first instance. But to retain them at school it is necessary to remove the cause which takes them away from it, and the cause which takes them away is, in a large proportion of cases, economic pressure. The simplest way of lightening that pressure is by an intelligent use of the maintenance allowance. The sum of £8 19s. 1d., which is the average value of a maintenance allowance in the county boroughs of England, may be adequate for a child of eleven. But it is scarcely adequate even then, and it is obviously quite disproportionate to the cost of keeping a child of fifteen or sixteen. The proper policy, already pursued by some authorities, but not, apparently, by the majority, is to increase the value of the maintenance allowance year by year up to eighteen.[13]

## IV

## TEACHERS AND ACCOMMODATION

In proposing as the goal a system of universal secondary education, we do not forget the difficulties arising from the shortage of accommodation and of teachers. Merely to provide increased free places, without increasing the school accommodation available, would result in excluding fee-paying pupils without adding to the total number of children receiving a secondary education. Nor is it necessary to emphasise that the quality and number of the teachers are the most vital element in education, and that the process of secondary, as of other kinds of education, is obviously limited by them.

[13] A practicalexample is given by the Proposed Scheme of Education for the County of Durham, p. 44: "Maintenance grants to pupils engaged upon advanced work in secondary schools, intended to enable secondary school pupils to prolong their school life. . . . They are awarded to such pupils as, being over sixteen, are classified and taught in advanced classes, and are payable at the following rates: Boys, first year £15, second year £20; girls, first year £10, second year £15."

These difficulties are serious, but they must be seen in the right perspective. It must be remembered, in the first place, that they are not in any way peculiar to the programme urged in these pages. The continuation schools to be established under Section 10 of the Act of 1918 would, it is estimated, require 16,000 teachers within two years of their creation and ultimately 32,000. In the years following 1870 School Boards were engaged in building up a service and finding accommodation for a generation after the provision of elementary education had become a statutory obligation. The development of a universal system of secondary education is a larger problem than the first, but a smaller problem than the second. It will proceed gradually, and the *personnel* and equipment which it requires will be created as it develops. Nor, in fact, can they be created in any other way. If the lack of teachers were an insuperable barrier to any new departure in education, no new departure would ever have taken place; for not only in England, but in all other countries, the State has not created a supply of potential teachers and then used them to do the work it wants. It has created work for them to do and then taken steps to find the necessary teachers. Indeed, so long as secondary education is confined to so small a fraction of the population as is the case to-day, no other course is open to it. If it will not "grow" teachers, it is inevitably driven to "force" them.

While, therefore, it is true that the shortage of teachers and of accommodation makes inevitable the lapse of a period of years before our full programme can be realised, that is no reason for not moving towards its realisation with such speed as is practicable. For, in the second place, as the Act of 1918 requires, and as the schemes of Local Education Authorities make clear, there will, in any case, be a large addition to the number of teachers and to the school buildings in the near future. The question is not *whether* we shall provide more accommodation and recruit additional teachers, but *for what purpose* both are to be employed, and *what standard* of quality is as a consequence to be created. It is submitted that it would

be the height of unwisdom to mortgage the resources available for education to provision of a kind which, because it is in the nature of a makeshift, is likely in ten or fifteen years to be superseded. Instead, for example, of providing fifty-nine additional central schools with twenty-three thousand more school places, it would be wiser, it may be suggested, for the London County Council to spend the same sum on developing secondary education. The former have their merits, but it would probably not be unfair to say that they are often regarded both by educationalists and by the workers of the country as a cheap substitute, to be tolerated only so long as nothing better can be provided. The latter would be a step towards meeting the demands for secondary education which must be met sooner or later, and which will be met most economically if, in the interval, money has not been diverted to inferior institutions which satisfy no one. Instead of providing part-time continued education, Local Authorities had much better begin to face in earnest the question of full-time secondary education. The former is preferable to the economic and moral chaos in which boys and girls who leave the primary schools are plunged at present. But few informed observers regard them as other than a transition stage on the road to secondary education for all. To invest heavily in a depreciating, if widely advertised, stock of the kind is, both from an educational and from an economic point of view, an error of judgment.

In the meantime, even with the existing resources, something can be done to move in the right direction. The preparatory departments of grant-aided secondary schools, containing some 26,944 children, of whom the greater number are under the age of ten, have certain advantages for the children—all children of fee-paying parents—admitted to them. But in view of the grave shortage of school places, it can hardly be doubted that the Departmental Committee was right in stating that the accommodation which they represent would be better

employed in providing for children entering at eleven. Central schools, whenever possible, should be converted as soon as practicable into secondary schools. In urban areas there are probably a certain number of primary schools which might similarly be scheduled for conversion, and, more rarely, it will be possible to acquire suitable buildings which are now used for other than educational purposes. Is it even too revolutionary to suggest that a small step towards a solution of the problem of school accommodation might be taken by a change in the prevailing fashion of school architecture? "It is not bricks and mortar," to adapt a famous saying, "which make a school, but children and teachers." In Wales, we understand, the earlier public secondary schools were housed in temporary buildings. It is conceivable, at least, that in England school buildings might be erected both more cheaply and more expeditiously if they were designed to follow somewhat more closely the plan of the "open-air" school, and somewhat less closely that of a fortress designed to resist both the ravages and the improvements of time.

It has been suggested to us, indeed, that a still more radical departure might usefully be contemplated. If the object aimed at is to make primary and secondary education continuous, one way of doing so would be to group them as two divisions within a single school. After all, it is urged, whether education is "secondary" or not does not depend upon the particular building in which it is carried on. Why not frankly recognise that what is now the public elementary school, if it is educating children of eleven+ to fourteen effectively, must necessarily be doing a good deal of "secondary" work? Why not take account of that fact in the organisation of future schools, and, wherever it is possible, reorganise existing schools on that basis? The practical difficulties of such a proposal—the fact that the whole standard of staffing, air-space, playing fields, amenities in general is lower in existing primary schools than is required by the Board in secondary schools—are obvious. The existence of that dual standard is indeed one of the evils arising

from the division between them. Nor, of course, would the suggestion solve by itself the problem of accommodation, since the primary schools themselves are already overcrowded. The practical advantages, however, would also be considerable. In so far as the proposal could be carried out, there would be an addition, at least, to secondary school accommodation. The difficulty caused in many areas by the distance of the secondary school from the homes of the children would disappear. The thoroughly vicious idea that primary and secondary education form two systems of education would be destroyed in the most effective possible manner —by making it obvious that they were parts of a single whole.

Which, if any, of these practical measures is to be adopted must be decided in the light of the varying circumstances of different localities. The point of principle to be insisted upon is that the objective—universal secondary education—should be kept steadily in view, and that the educational effort of the next fifteen years should be concentrated on attaining it, not dissipated on plans which, even if laudable in themselves, are of inferior importance.

## CHAPTER V

# THE PROPOSED SUBSTITUTES FOR SECONDARY EDUCATION

WE have urged in our preceding chapters that the main educational effort of the nation should be directed to building up a system of secondary education for all children from eleven to sixteen, and that our immediate measures of reform should be inspired by that object and should be designed to bring nearer its realisation. But the policy for which we have pleaded is not the only possible one. It is confronted not merely by a blank opposition to educational improvements of any kind, but by proposals for improvement which are advanced as alternatives to it. It has, in short, to face competitors. In the present chapter we proceed to consider shortly these rival policies and to state why, after considering them, we still insist that the main energies of all good citizens, and of organised labour in particular, must be devoted to giving effect, doubtless with improvements in detail, and with due allowance for the varying circumstances of different localities, to the general principles which are stated above.

## I

## THE MAIN ALTERNATIVES

It is the more necessary to examine these alternative schemes because "public secondary education" is a phrase which is not free from ambiguity. In its strictest sense it might be confined to education given in institutions complying with the Board's regulations for

secondary schools and receiving grants from it. In its broadest sense, it might be extended to cover almost any kind of post-primary education lasting over the period of adolescence, including part-time continuation schools and evening schools. In the past it has been very far from true that all education given in secondary schools could properly be described as "secondary." In the future, it might be asked, may not a good deal of what is really secondary education be given in institutions other than secondary schools? It was the realisation of that possibility which underlay, we think, the welcome given by many persons to Section 10 of the Act of 1918. They hoped that the continuation schools might in time become, in all but name, a system of part-time secondary education.

There would appear, in fact, to be two alternative lines of development towards a more adequate system of higher education. On the one hand, it may take place by the extension of these other types of post-primary education, without any attempt being made either largely to increase the provision of secondary education or to merge them in it. On the other hand, it may proceed by taking the secondary school, in the stricter sense of the word "secondary," as the standard at which adolescent education must aim, by increasing the provision of varying types of secondary schools as rapidly as possible, and by seeking so to raise the standard of the other and less adequate forms of post-primary education as ultimately to make them, not an alternative to secondary education, but an integral part of it.

Which of these alternative channels educational progress is to follow is obviously a matter of the gravest practical moment. In the latter case the line between primary and secondary education will be re-drawn, and the great majority of children will ultimately pass to some kind, though neither necessarily nor probably the same kind, of full-time secondary education about eleven+. In the former case the secondary schools, while recruiting an increased number of pupils, will remain

the schools of a small minority, and primary education will not be an avenue to secondary education, but will overlap it. In so far as post-primary education is developed at all, the rank and file of children in the elementary schools will either remain in them till fourteen and then enter a secondary school, or will pass between eleven and fourteen to some other institution, designed to give, like, for example, some "central" schools, a more or less specialised preparation for commerce or industry.

The attempt to organise some kind of advanced instruction for the older or brighter pupils in the primary schools without transferring them to secondary schools is almost as old as a public system of primary education. It is significant, indeed, of the instability of any arrangement which attempts to grade education without close reference to the natural facts of child development, that, almost in spite of themselves, by a strained construction of the Education Acts, and sometimes, as finally appeared, in defiance of them, authorities charged with the provision of primary education had hardly come into existence before they found themselves committed by the mere practical necessities of the situation to the organisation of education other than primary. The expedients adopted were numerous and have continued, in one shape or another, up to the present day. At one time they took the form of higher grade schools, at another of higher elementary schools, at a third of "higher tops," while side by side with the outgrowths of the primary school went on the development of a system of evening classes. The problem raised in this pamphlet is not, in short, an artificial one. It has haunted public education ever since its commencement.

These attempts to provide some kind of "advanced" or "continued" instruction for primary school children who would not pass to a secondary school had their origin long before the recent great development of public secondary education. In their inception they represented the only type of higher education available for them. At the present time they represent one type, full secondary education being the other. But educational

traditions, once established, die hard. In the days before a public system of secondary schools existed, the primary schools pushed out their own tentacles into the upper air of advanced education, because, while an extension of some form of post-primary education was obviously necessary, it was less troublesome to effect it by attaching certain forms of higher education as a kind of appendix to primary education than to undertake the effort of imagination and organisation involved in reconsidering the whole scheme of primary and secondary education from its foundations. Now that the nucleus, at least, of a public secondary system has been created, the earlier policy still proceeds by its already acquired momentum. Hence it is only rarely, it would seem, that Local Education Authorities have asked themselves, with Gloucestershire, Darlington, and West Ham, whether, if secondary education develops in the next generation as rapidly as in the last, it will not result in making these alternative types of post-primary education superfluous. In many cases, at least, it would not be fair to criticise them for that attitude. They may reasonably urge that hitherto the great majority of children have left school altogether at, or below, fourteen, and that, in such circumstances, the immediately urgent problem is to improve the quality of the higher ranges of primary education. Such improvement, it need hardly be said, is much to be welcomed, whatever the particular organisation used to effect it. At the same time, it ought to be possible to combine it with a policy which looks beyond the immediate exigencies of the next five years. What is needed, in short, is both to secure the more effective education of children who will leave school at fourteen, and also to develop secondary education on a scale adequate to the demand for it, which, as has been shown above, already exists, and which is likely, if experience may be trusted, to increase largely in the near future.

At the present time the most important of the alternatives to secondary education consists of (i) junior technical schools and central schools; (ii) part-time continued education, in the forms either, as in the past, of evening

classes, or, as under Section 10 of the Education Act, 1918, of day continuation schools. Neither of these has as yet developed on any very large scale. The junior technical schools numbered in 1918-19 only sixty-nine, and included some 9,422 children. The number of children in central schools was probably even smaller. The total number of persons under instruction in evening classes during some part of the year 1918-19 was in England 465,119. The intention of the Education Act, 1918, was, of course, both to develop advanced full-time instruction and to create a new system of part-time continued education, which was to be compulsory and universal. Section 2 (i) of the Act provides that "it shall be the duty of a Local Education Authority so to exercise their powers . . . as to make, or otherwise to secure, adequate and suitable provision, by means of central schools, central or special classes, or otherwise . . . for organising in public elementary schools courses of advanced instruction for the older or more intelligent children in attendance at such schools, including children who stay at such schools beyond the age of fourteen." Section 10 provides for the establishment of a system of part-time continuation schools for all young persons, not otherwise being educated, between fourteen and sixteen, and (after seven years) between fourteen and eighteen.

## II

## PART-TIME CONTINUED EDUCATION

On part-time continuation schools as an alternative to the development of full-time secondary education it is unnecessary for us to speak at length. The Labour Movement warmly welcomed the Education Act of 1918, and it has since made every effort to avert the suspension of it in deference to the pressure of industrial interests, which had opposed it when first introduced and which used the financial panic as a cloak for resisting any interference with cheap juvenile labour. Though the demand of Labour was for free and universal secondary education,

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not for continuation schools, it recognised gladly that the latter would do something, at least, to protect and develop boys and girls during the critical period of adolescence. In 1919 the Education Advisory Committee of the Labour Party issued a pamphlet explaining how Section 10 of the Act might be administered to the best advantage, and local Labour Parties up and down the country were zealous to secure its operation.

It is not, therefore, in any spirit of carping criticism or impracticable idealism that we assert that part-time continuation schools cannot be accepted by the Labour Movement as a substitute for the programme of secondary education set out in this pamphlet. The advantages of even eight hours a week continued education between fourteen and sixteen are obvious. But so, except as a transitional measure, are its weaknesses. The physical strain of combining forty hours' work in the factory with eight hours in school may not be too severe at sixteen or seventeen. At fourteen, except for the very strongest children and in the very lightest employment, it is likely to be excessive. The intellectual work of boys and girls must inevitably suffer from the distraction of interests involved in the attempt to serve two masters. The continuation schools will, it is to be hoped, be real schools, with a corporate life and in time a corporate tradition; but, at best, their influence must be weak compared with that of a good secondary school which children attend full-time for a period of four to five years. Nor must it be forgotten that the question of the quality of the educational system is at least as important as that of its quantity, and that the quality depends largely upon the relating of primary to post-primary education in such a way as to correspond more exactly with the natural facts of child development. "For the normal boy," states an official, "elementary education stops at about eleven. It is a mistake to continue after this stage the educational methods that are suitable for the preceding stage." Merely to tack eight hours continued education on to a primary school system that continues up to fourteen does not solve the fundamental problem of

scientifically connecting preparatory and adolescent education. It gives it up.

For these reasons we cannot regard a system of part-time continued education between fourteen and sixteen as anything but a temporary arrangement. As a mere matter of history, it was advocated prior to 1918 more often on social and moral grounds, as a check on the exploitation of juvenile labour or as an alternative to the life of the streets, than because it was thought to possess any very great educational merits. The real function of the continuation school seems to us to be somewhat different from that usually suggested. It ought to be a continuation, not of primary, but of secondary, education, and it will find its proper place in the years between sixteen and eighteen, when the majority of boys and girls will have entered some branch of industry but ought still to be in touch with education. It is significant that certain administrators appear to prefer to part-time continuation schools the development of full-time secondary education up to fifteen or sixteen. "If an intermediate school system be established," writes the Director of Education for Darlington, "we shall have solved almost all our compulsory continued education problems."[1]

While, therefore, the reasons given for suspending the operations of Section 10 of the Act are sufficient in themselves to make any person of moderate humanity and public spirit determined to secure its immediate application, part-time education between fourteen and sixteen must be regarded, at best, as no more than a temporary arrangement. What is to be hoped is that Local Education Authorities will concentrate their energy on developing full-time secondary education for all children up to sixteen, and that part-time education will succeed it in the years between sixteen and eighteen. At the later age, when boys and girls are physically stronger and when the foundations of specialised training have been laid by five years in a secondary school, it should be of the utmost value. But it cannot take the place of a good

[1] Memorandum on " A School Scheme " and questions arising out of the Education Act, 1918 (Darlington, May, 1919).

general education, and to attempt to use it as a substitute for the secondary school is only to prepare the way for another disillusionment. Cheap substitutes, which have to be abandoned in ten or fifteen years, are apt to be more expensive than a plan of development which, even if it costs more at the beginning, can be relied upon to supply the framework of a permanent system. In the long run the bolder policy is likely to prove to be, not merely the only policy which will meet the demands of Labour and of educationalists, but also the most economical.

## III

## THE FUTURE OF CENTRAL SCHOOLS AND SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

Part-time continuation schools are not the only alternative to secondary education. There are also central schools and junior technical schools. The junior technical school has hitherto usually differed from the secondary school in purpose, leaving age, and curriculum. It is designed to offer practical instruction for boys and girls who will leave school for industry at a younger age than the majority of secondary school pupils. The age at which it is entered appears to be usually between twelve and fourteen, and is thus somewhat higher than that of entering secondary schools. The curriculum is more highly specialised, and the elements of "general" education in it are much reduced. The characteristics of the "central" schools vary. But their general tendency appears to be somewhat similar, and the description of them in the scheme of the London County Council, the pioneer of the central school system, which established fifty-one such schools between 1911 and 1919, and which has proposed to increase them to 100, with accommodation for 40,000 children, is probably fairly typical. "Central schools have been established with a view to providing for certain specially selected boys and girls from the age of eleven upwards a four years' general course of instruction with a definite commercial or industrial bias."[2] They are

[2] Scheme of London County Council, pp. 15-16.

definitely part of the primary school system, and, in London, at any rate, are distinguished from the secondary schools by several well defined differences. Thus, (i) they are probably somewhat inferior to them in respect of buildings, equipment, and ratio of staff to pupils; (ii) the curriculum is semi-vocational; (iii) the teachers are not paid on a secondary scale or required to have secondary qualifications; (iv) the normal leaving age is lower than that of the secondary school; (v) no maintenance allowances, except in a few cases, are paid; (vi) —a point which is possibly their principal attraction from the point of view of the Education Authority—they are, compared with secondary education, cheap. They are, in fact, an annex to the primary school, distinguished from it by the fact that they are designed for "selected" children, that they are somewhat better staffed and equipped, and that they are intended to include in the curriculum specialised instruction to prepare the pupils for entry into commerce and industry, an entry which, it is contemplated, will normally take place not later than fifteen.

It is evident from the schemes of Local Education Authorities that, when the present financial panic has abated, there is likely to be a movement to develop central schools and similar institutions. The point upon which the Labour Movement must make up its mind is how far it will accept that policy as a substitute for a wide extension of secondary education. The answer to that question must largely depend upon the lines upon which it is proposed to treat them. There appear, in fact, to be two ways of envisaging the functions of what are now called central schools. On the one hand, they may be regarded as giving a somewhat more advanced type of primary education. On the other hand, they may be regarded as simply one kind of secondary school. However secondary education may be organised, it is necessary to recognise that some boys and girls will continue it to seventeen or eighteen, while others, and a larger number, will end it at sixteen, if not before. It is reasonable that the organisation and curriculum of secondary schools should take account of this difference,

and also, of course, that it should make provision for the needs of those children who progress most rapidly when the curriculum contains a liberal allowance of "practical" work. The central schools might conceivably be regarded, as they appear to be, for instance, in Bradford, as an addition to the supply of junior secondary schools, taking the lower form work, and thus leaving existing secondary school accommodation for the more advanced work, while acting as "feeders" to secondary schools proper. In the breadth of their curriculum and in the quality of their staff and equipment they would, in fact, be secondary education. But they would be secondary education designed for children who will normally remain in them for not more than five years and who will leave about their sixteenth birthday.

It is towards some such transformation of the central school and junior technical school that some progressive Education Authorities seem to be feeling their way. Thus the scheme of the Kent Education Committee proposes that "the present junior technical schools and commercial schools shall be absorbed into secondary or intermediate schools," and that a system of intermediate schools shall be established providing "a course of advanced instruction from three to four years, capable of extension to a fifth year for pupils who will remain in full-time attendance at school until the age of sixteen." A touch of realism is to be given to the curriculum by relating it to the life of the neighbourhood. But "in all cases the basis of the curriculum will consist of English, history, geography, mathematics, science, handicrafts (for girls domestic subjects), and physical education."[3] Except in the absence from the curriculum of one foreign language, which is, as a general rule, required by the regulations of the Board for secondary schools, such a curriculum is in all essential respects a secondary curriculum, and, if the highly important matters of staffing, equipment, and grants are

[3] Draft Scheme of Education for Kent under the Education Act, 1918, pp. 62-3 and 108.

for the moment put on one side, such intermediate schools are secondary schools in all but name. The suggestions made by the Direction of Education for Darlington are much the same. His proposals are that intermediate schools should be established to take the place of the existing central and junior technical schools, that they should contain sufficient school places to accommodate all children over twelve, and that the age-period should be twelve to sixteen. Such "intermediate schools," he remarks, emphasising the alternative lines of development to which we have called attention above, "may be of the type now represented by our central commercial and junior technical schools, *or preferably follow the same lines of general education as secondary schools, from which I believe they will be indistinguishable when they are in full working order.* I think they should be vocational only to the extent needed to convince pupils that much of their learning is capable of practical application. . . . To turn these into 'vocational' schools of a type favoured in certain areas would only result in separating scholars into groups according to probable occupations, which would be little, if any, better than grouping according to capacity to pay fees. . . . *A good general education is the first essential whatever calling a boy or girl proposes to follow.*"[4]

One line of advance, therefore, is to work for a transformation of central and junior technical schools into intermediate schools of the type suggested by the Directors of Education whose views we have quoted. In so far as that were done, the whole educational system would be simplified by the merging in the secondary system of what, with all their merits, are at present really educational hybrids, the central schools and junior technical schools. A necessary corollary of the change would be, of course, that such intermediate schools should become eligible for secondary school grants and be made amenable to the Board's regulations for secondary schools. In the past, no doubt with wisdom, the

[4] Memorandum (Darlington), pp. 35-36.

Board has been more anxious to maintain the quality of secondary education than to increase its quantity. The recognition of such intermediate schools would not, however, involve any "lowering of the standard." The need for what may be called junior secondary education has to be met, and the whole level of the institutions by which it is partially met at present would be raised if they were pushed upwards out of the rather ambiguous position which they occupy to-day into the secondary system. There is reason to believe that such a development would commend itself to many practical educationalists. "It would be a great gain," writes an experienced official, "if it were definitely recognised that elementary education ends at eleven+. Beyond the age of eleven+ we have at present central, secondary, and junior technical schools. At present only the secondary school is supposed to belong to higher education. But are not all three types secondary in the wider acceptance of the term? . . . *Has not the time come for recognising as secondary all schools that provide a course of full-time instruction between eleven and sixteen years of age?* All such schools should have every encouragement to develop. There should be no preferential treatment in respect of grant and expenses of upkeep. *If, for example, classes of twenty-five, highly qualified staff, and spacious playgrounds are the proper standard for the secondary school, they are clearly the proper standard for a central or junior technical school.* Just as existing secondary schools are encouraged to develop, and to retain their pupils up to eighteen or nineteen years of age, so should central schools be allowed to develop in the same way if they are able to do so."

Disputes about words are unprofitable. There is no mysterious virtue attaching to the mere phrase "secondary education." What is required is that, within the elastic frame-work of a national system, each locality should develop the type of higher education which best suits its own conditions, and it is quite possible that in some areas the establishment of a general system of secondary education up to sixteen can best be

reached through the further development of central and junior technical schools on the lines indicated by the official quoted above. The more secondary education develops, the greater the need for variety among secondary schools. And with an intermediate education thus conceived, lasting from twelve to sixteen, cultural while appealing to practical interests, with "a highly qualified staff and spacious playgrounds," no reformer need quarrel. It should be the aim of the Labour Movement to hasten the transformation of central schools and junior technical schools in the direction suggested by these authorities.

It should be equally its aim, however, to resist their extension when they are designed, not as part of the secondary system, but as an alternative to it. For it must be pointed out that, as they exist to-day, most central schools and junior technical schools cannot by any stretch of imagination be described as giving secondary education, and that there is a considerable section of opinion which would be strongly opposed to their development on the lines indicated above. Central schools such as many, if not most, of those hitherto established neither are, nor are meant to be, a genuine part of the secondary system. On the contrary, they are simply an annex to elementary education: in the words of the scheme of the London County Council, they are "intended to replace the former higher grade and higher elementary schools." Their curriculum is framed "with a view to enabling the pupils to pass direct into commercial and industrial pursuits." At the age of twelve or thirteen a child is to plunge, apparently, into the abstruse sciences of "book-keeping, shorthand, and typewriting." The buildings and staffing are somewhat better than those of the ordinary elementary schools. But they appear sometimes (though not always) to be of a kind which the Board would not tolerate in a secondary school.

If central schools of this type are offered as a substitute for secondary education, Labour can define its attitude towards them in a sentence. To put the matter

bluntly, it "is not having any." It is, of course, of urgent importance to improve the higher ranges of primary education. But the danger of central schools of this kind—a danger which does not seem to have been wholly avoided—is that they may induce public opinion to acquiesce in the provision of secondary school places on a quite inadequate scale, on the ground that, for all but a small minority of children, secondary education is neither practicable nor desirable.

That is a position which the Labour Movement cannot for a moment accept. The objection to central schools thus conceived is not due, as is sometimes suggested, to any lack of appreciation of the part which can be played by "practical" work in the school curriculum. Practical work in the sense, not of specialised training for a particular occupation, but of work which is closely related to the living interests of the children, is eminently desirable on strictly educational ground. Wisely used, it is a stimulus, not an impediment, to intellectual development, and experience shows that it reacts favourably upon the other subjects studied. It already has a place in the secondary schools, and will have a more important place in the future. Nor is the ground of our criticism merely the commercial and industrial "bias" which is supposed to colour the work of the central schools. It is true, indeed, that it appears to rest upon the mistaken idea that specialisation can usefully begin at twelve or thirteen and precede, instead of following, a good general education. The proper comment upon that fallacy is that of Mr. Boyde, the Director of Education for Darlington : "We have not yet gone so far as to establish 'vocational' schools for intending doctors, lawyers, or those who intend to take the higher branches of engineering. A good general education is the first essential whatever calling a boy or girl proposes to follow." But, though the conception which regards typewriting and shorthand as suitable subjects for children of thirteen is erroneous, the practice may be better than the theory, and a sensible headmaster will usually be able to secure that these fantasies are not allowed seriously

to interfere with the general education of the children. The real defect of the central schools, as sometimes conceived hitherto, is that they propose to offer what is in essence a cheap and mutilated alternative to secondary education, and to do so partly for the sake of economy, partly because of the fundamentally vicious doctrine that the education of children during the period of adolescence should be determined by the requirements of the employment which they will eventually enter.

With the parsimony which offers a sham, because it grudges, except for a selected minority of children, expenditure on the reality, Labour can make truce as little as with the vulgar commercialism which conceives of the manufacture of efficient typists and mechanics as the primary object of adolescent education. In this matter, at least, it can claim with some confidence that educational theory is on its side. All educationalists are agreed that classifications of children made at eleven and twelve should be, at most, provisional, because the younger the children, the more likely are they to be mistaken. If the central school system, as it appears to be conceived by some authorities, becomes general, it will be decided on the strength of an examination held between eleven and twelve that a child is not "capable of profiting" by secondary education. Clearly, children should not be segregated in different institutions at eleven or twelve merely because at sixteen or seventeen they may enter different occupations. On the central school system the future clerk or artisan is detected in the child of eleven, and he is drafted to a school designed to make him one. Clearly, if the requirements laid down in the Regulations of the Board as to organised games and physical exercises, as to numbers, salaries, and qualification of teachers, as to size of classes and school accommodation are good for any children, then they are good for all children.

There was a certain simple, if callous and fallacious, logic in the policy of providing no higher education at all for children from the primary schools on the ground that it was useless or dangerous for them to

have it. But to admit children to advanced education on the ground that they ought to have it, and then to offer it them under conditions which are admittedly not good enough for other children of precisely the same age, the same physical requirements, and, often, the same intellectual ability, and which in fact the State does not allow in the schools attended by them, has a good deal of the callousness and none of the logic. The fact that the children in central schools are likely to enter trade or industry (if it is true) is very largely irrelevant to the question of the curriculum suitable for them, and entirely irrelevant to the question of staffing, equipment, and accommodation. A boy does not need less opportunity for games because he is going to be a blacksmith and not a business man; nor has Providence provided the future clerk with smaller lungs than the future director; nor should teachers be paid less for teaching boys and girls in central schools than for teaching their brothers and sisters in secondary schools.

The truth is that, as often conceived hitherto, the central schools are, what *The Times* has called them, "a product of the 1870 conception of education."[5] They rest on the assumption that the divorce between primary and secondary education is to be maintained, and then, since that divorce creates the insoluble problem of how to organise advanced instruction for the children excluded from secondary schools, the central school is introduced as a makeshift partially to fill the gap, as the higher elementary and higher grade schools were introduced in the past. It is, in short, an inferior substitute for secondary education. But, as the Director of Education for Gloucestershire remarks, "The worker will not put up with inferior substitutes. Why should he? It is not to the interests of the country at large that he should. What is good for the children of other people is good for his. What is necessary for theirs is necessary for his. He will want the secondary school."[6]

[5] *The Times Educational Supplement*, May 1, 1919.

[6] Gloucestershire Interim Scheme in Respect of Secondary Education, p. 3.

The course of wisdom is to recognise that fact, not "to waste half a dozen generations of school children in the process" of making the central school a transition stage towards the secondary school, but to cease building central schools, and to turn such of the existing central schools as are suitable into secondary schools at the earliest possible date. If the Board will let it be known that its policy is, in the words of the distinguished official quoted above, "to recognise as secondary schools all schools that provide a course of full-time instruction between eleven and sixteen years of age"; to require that they shall comply, in the matter of staffing and equipment, class rooms and playing fields, with the regulations for secondary schools, and *to pay them grants on the secondary scale*, Local Education Authorities will be led, it may be prophesied, to consider the wisdom of concentrating their energies, not on the creation of more "inferior substitutes," like many central schools and junior technical schools of to-day, but on the development of a really adequate system of secondary education.

## CHAPTER VI

# THE POSITION OF THE SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

IT has already been made clear that the necessary facilities for a large extension of secondary education can be made available only if the requisite number of teachers is forthcoming. It goes without saying that these teachers must have had a University education and training. In other days it was perhaps the principal task of the Universities to educate those who were afterwards to lead the mass of the population. Although nowadays the functions of the University are far wider than this—and with free secondary education for all the demand for University education will become still more widespread—yet the education and training of teachers will always be a very important part of their work, more especially when it comes to be recognised that the primary schools must be levelled up to the secondary schools in respect of buildings, equipment, and status and qualifications of teachers. It is obvious that the great development of secondary education which the nation requires will in years to come give us a very much larger reserve from which our supply of teachers may be obtained; indeed, the only way by which the acute problem arising from the present shortage of teachers can be solved is to break the vicious circle which causes the extension of secondary education to be hampered by the scarcity of teachers, and teachers to be scarce because there are too few boys and girls in the secondary schools. When a Government is prepared to undertake in earnest such an extension as we contemplate, it will no doubt offer special facilities and inducements to University graduates to undertake

the necessary training. Within one year a considerable number of them could be equipped to take up work in the new schools, and every succeeding year would add to their number. Nor must it be forgotten that there are in the primary schools a large number of teachers who are specialists in certain subjects, many of whom would probably be well gratified to teach those subjects in secondary schools.

This contemplated influx into the profession will only take place, however, if salaries and conditions of work are satisfactory. It is, therefore, relevant to inquire how far existing secondary teachers are satisfied with their position and prospects, and to what extent recruits are being attracted into the secondary branch of the profession.

The lot of the teacher in a secondary school has never been an enviable one. It is true that the better-paid posts in the great public schools are normally comfortable enough, and that men of little ambition and with no desire to marry jog along contentedly in preparatory schools and in a certain number of efficient privately-owned schools. But in secondary schools aided or maintained by Local Education Authorities there has been during recent years a remarkable manifestation of revolt against conditions of service that were fast becoming intolerable. Inadequately paid, and therefore filled with constant anxiety as to his present position and future prospects, the teacher in these schools has struggled on, counting himself fortunate indeed if he has been able to save enough to provide himself with a small pittance for his declining years. As there is a very general impression that recent improvements in salary have given him substantial benefits, and have even placed him in a highly-favoured position, it may be worth while to give the facts of the situation.

The report of the Burnham Committee on Salaries in Secondary Schools states that the commencing salary of an assistant master who is a University graduate shall be £240, rising by increments of £15 per annum to a maximum of £500. If he has taken a good honours

degree—which means a first class, or, in certain cases, a second class—he receives an addition of £25 to the minimum and £50 to the maximum. If he has spent a year after graduating in being trained for his profession, he obtains an extra allowance of £20 on the minimum, but nothing is added to the maximum. Should he be appointed to a post of special responsibility, his maximum may be as much as £50 greater. For assistant mistresses the scale is £225-15-400, with similar extra allowances. Head masters and head mistresses have no special scale, but it is recommended that no head master shall receive less than £600 as a minimum, and no head mistress less than £500. These scales apply to the whole country with the exception of London, where men assistants receive an additional £50 and women £40. Neighbouring counties which are partly within the Metropolitan Police district may adopt the London scale, but so far only Middlesex has done so. There is a "carry-over" arrangement by which existing teachers will not reach their proper position on the scale until September, 1922.

The report has been very generally adopted throughout the country, though some twelve or fifteen authorities have made modifications which unfavourably affect the teachers working in their area, while a few authorities have not adopted it at all.

It is an open secret that the representatives of the teachers were only induced to accept these scales in the hope that a considerable fall in the cost of living would eventually render them more adequate. It is, therefore, with considerable apprehension that teachers have seen the contention being put forward that the present slight fall in the cost of living justifies a modification of the Burnham award. It cannot be too widely known that the scales were agreed upon by Local Authorities and teachers as a national settlement which would not come up for revision until 1925, unless, indeed, the cost of living rises above the index figure 170, in which case the position will be reconsidered. Thus there is specific provision for an upward modification of the scale, but in no case is there to be a reduction.

While, then, teachers have agreed loyally to adhere to the terms of the report, and while they look forward to reaching in September, 1922, a position, not indeed of affluence, but of reasonable satisfaction, they will resist by every means in their power any attempt to destroy the report. Such an attempt will revive all the old unrest, and will have a most disastrous effect. In various parts of the country those who have always opposed educational expenditure, reinforced by so-called "economists" and "anti-wasters," are crying out for a repudiation of the Burnham scales. But the teachers have an unanswerable case against reduction. When the cost of living rose during the war, they were among the last to receive any relief in the way of bonus—a relief which was always inadequate. Moreover, their representatives have agreed to a national settlement which is to operate until 1925. Thus if, even before they are receiving full benefit from the new scales, they are told that they must submit to reductions, they will justly complain that they are the victims of a gross breach of faith.

It remains to be seen whether the new scale will attract the right type of man and woman into the secondary schools. A salary of £240 at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three is not excessive for a man who has had to spend a large amount of money on University training. It is urged, of course, that a pension scheme is now in operation, whereby a teacher can retire at the age of sixty on as much as half his average salary for his last five years of service. But, in the case of existing teachers, much of the value of this is taken away because of the distinction between qualifying and recognised service. Put shortly, qualifying service is time but not money. Service in certain schools may count towards the time one must serve to secure a pension at all, but it has no monetary value. Moreover, the value of the Act is being lessened by certain irritating rulings of the Board of Education. In the case of broken service, for instance, they insist on regarding a year's service as 365 days, whereas everyone knows that a year's service is less than

this period. Again, if a school changes hands (even if it retains the same head master and staff) it may be regarded as an entirely new school, and thus the pension rights of the whole of the staff may be jeopardised. There is a great need for a short amending Act which would put right these and other defects. One result of the establishment of the Burnham scales, to which attention is now being drawn, is that it is becoming increasingly difficult for any but young teachers to change their posts. For instance, a man aged thirty-two, with, say, ten years' experience, will have reached the point £390 (at least) on the Burnham scale. Many Local Authorities will look askance at such a man, however well qualified by experience and attainments he may be for a given position, because he is expensive compared with a young and untried teacher. The result is that the profession is becoming much less mobile, and consequently educational efficiency is undoubtedly being impaired. One remedy that is being suggested is a redistribution of educational expenditure between the Board and the Local Authorities. There seems to be no reason why there should not be a uniform local rate for education throughout the country, the difference being made up by the Board by means of a deficiency grant. At any rate, it ought not to be to the financial advantage of the Local Authority to employ teachers who are for the most part on the lower rungs of the salary ladder.

From the point of view of the Labour Party the Secondary Burnham Scale is certainly not too generous. Moreover, the minimum of the scale ought to be raised, not only for the purpose of attracting the type of teacher required, but also because it is inadvisable to perpetuate such differences in salary as now exist between men doing essentially the same work. It is true, of course, that experience does add to a teacher's value, but ten years should be a period sufficiently long to enable a teacher to reach the maximum of efficiency and hence to be worthy of the maximum salary. Further, the Labour Party is in complete accord with the feeling of teachers that training for the profession, as distinct from general education,

is essential. This constitutes an additional argument for raising the minimum salary, for it involves a year of post-graduate work. All teachers know that training is not a substitute for experience, for it is only when a teacher comes to deal unaided with refractory human material that his real capacity becomes tested. At the same time, proper training enables him to avoid many pitfalls, and to become an efficient teacher in a much shorter time than would otherwise be the case. Even now the Teachers' Registration Council will not admit an untrained teacher to its register.

The question of tenure is one that has for a long time exercised the minds of secondary teachers, for it is not too much to say that tenure is far less secure in secondary schools than in primary schools. It is no longer possible for a head master to inform the staff of a school to which he has been newly appointed that he proposes to begin work with an entirely new staff; nor is it usual to dismiss a teacher who is nearing the maximum of the scale and at the same time intimate to him that he is eligible to apply for the vacancy at the minimum of the scale—cases which are not imaginary but have both occurred in actual practice. But what is wanted at the present time is some method of securing that when a teacher has accepted a post, and has passed successfully through a probationary period, he shall be able to feel sure that his position, so long as his work is efficiently done, shall be permanent in character. Of course everyone knows that it is sometimes necessary to reorganise the work of a school, and perhaps to dispense with the services of a particular teacher; but normally it would be easy to arrange that this teacher should be transferred to another school under the same Authority, without loss of salary or status. This matter of tenure is becoming increasingly important because of the immobility already spoken of in the case of teachers of long service. The plain fact is that, if a teacher over thirty-five is forced to give up his position, the result may be a tragedy.

In this connection it is necessary to consider the question of secret reports. A teacher is sometimes told that

he must leave a school because his work has received unfavourable comment from an inspector. The report in question may be six months old, and this may be the first intimation a teacher has received that his work was regarded as anything but successful. It is urgently necessary that every report should be shown at once to the teacher concerned, and that he should have an opportunity of replying to any unfavourable criticism. Moreover, it is noteworthy that teachers in conference have for some time past been claiming a full partnership in educational administration. This demand arises primarily from the desire to see the profession become a body of free men and women bringing enthusiasm and expert knowledge to bear upon the numerous problems, administrative as well as purely educational, that still remain to be solved. In this matter the mind of the teaching profession is evidently moving in the same direction as that of other organised workers, who are demanding some share of control over the conditions which govern their working lives.

Developments of this nature are not the immediate concern of the Labour Party. It ought, however, to watch them sympathetically, and to lend its good offices when the teachers are ready to put forward specific proposals. It is to be hoped that when this happens many of the difficulties to which we have referred will become easier of solution. It may become the function of the professional body as a whole to set up a standard of qualifications to which every teacher must attain, and to decide whether the individual teacher succeeds or falls short in professional competence. An advance so fraught with the possibility of good to the children of the country must proceed from the determined will and intelligent planning of the teachers themselves.

It will be useful at this point to give some account of the way in which secondary teachers are organised in their several Associations. There are four main Associations of Secondary Teachers, representing respectively the head masters, head mistresses, assistant masters, and assistant mistresses. All these bodies possess

a charter of incorporation. The National Union of Teachers also provides for the inclusion of secondary teachers within its ranks. In addition, there is the Head Masters' Conference, a body rather more loosely organised than the Incorporated Association of Head Masters, and representing in the main the schools independent of local control. A good many head masters are members of both bodies. A Joint Committee of the Four Associations has existed for some years, and has done very useful work in co-ordinating the interests of secondary teachers, and in taking joint action on many matters of common interest. With representatives sitting side by side on the Secondary Burnham Committee, this co-operation has tended to become much closer, and the recent coming together of the headquarters of all four Associations under one roof has distinctly enhanced the possibility of securing authoritative pronouncements on the policy of the secondary branch of the profession as a whole. A similar co-ordination of secondary interests is also taking place in the provinces. Local "Joint Four Committees" on the lines of the main committee have been set up in a great many districts, and have in many cases taken their full share in local educational politics, especially in the matter of securing representation on the Advisory Committees which have been established by some Local Authorities.

This particular form of public work, useful as it is in its way, does not, however, satisfy the legitimate ambition of secondary teachers to serve not only on Advisory Committees, but also on the Education Committees themselves and on other public bodies. It is a matter for regret that comparatively few Local Authorities have made much use of that part of the Act of 1902 which allows them to co-opt teachers. In a good many cases there is some representation of primary teachers. But that of secondary teachers, where it exists, is haphazard in the sense that it is often effected without consultation with the Secondary Associations

concerned. It is perhaps hardly necessary to urge that adequate representation of teachers on Local Education Authorities is necessary if the administrative machine is to work smoothly. There is no part of the public service in which unchecked bureaucracy may have a more disastrous effect than in the domain of education. It is fatally easy to burden the schools with innumerable regulations involving an enormous amount of clerical work, or to check that initiative and sense of freedom which every real teacher ought to possess. The presence of teachers on Education Committees does go some way towards keeping educational administration in touch with realities, and it is to be hoped that in the future the claims of secondary teachers in this connection will be more widely recognised than they have been in the past.

While the secondary teachers have been working towards a closer federation of interests, they have not been unmindful of the great impetus given to the idea of a united profession by the establishment of the Teachers' Registration Council. Since the setting up of that body, on which Primary, Secondary, Specialist, and University teachers are equally represented, the minds of many teachers have been moving towards finding a method of enabling all teachers to meet on common ground. Many of the old prejudices are dying away, and the secondary teachers for their part would certainly welcome some plan which, while enabling them to retain their separate entity, would emphasise the fact that they are members of a united profession. Signs are not wanting that the great organisation which represents in the main primary education—the National Union of Teachers—is also considering the best means by which the mind of the teaching profession as a whole can express itself. There are here great possibilities, not only for united action against the common enemy, but for considered and constructive criticism of our educational system.

Once the profession is united, the old anti-social distinction between primary and secondary teachers will tend to disappear. The qualifications required from both kinds of teachers will be similar, and it will therefore

be possible for teachers to pass easily from primary into secondary schools and *vice versa*. The aim should be to make our educational system an organic unity, alive in every part, served by teachers united, self-governing, and free.

## CHAPTER VII

# THE LION IN THE PATH

### I

### THE COST OF OUR PROPOSALS

THE exponents of an educational policy may reasonably be asked to offer some indication of the expenditure which it will entail. If it is agreed that a large increase should be made, both in the provision of secondary education and in the facilities for rendering it easily accessible to families of small means, what is the financial cost of such developments likely to be?

The answer to that question must depend upon the degree of rapidity with which the change is introduced. For the reasons stated above, we agree with those educationalists who look forward to the time when the majority of children will spend the years from eleven to sixteen in one kind or another of secondary school. But, even if that policy is adopted as the goal at which to aim, it is obvious that practical considerations, in particular the shortage of accommodation and teachers, will prevent it being carried out except by gradual stages. What we anticipate, in fact, is not any sudden large addition to the expenditure on secondary education, but a steady advance. Fees at grant-aided secondary schools (which, at the moment, with lamentable shortsightedness, are being raised) will be abolished and maintenance allowances increased. Local Education Authorities will meet the present unsatisfied demand for secondary education by adding to their provision of secondary school places, as many have already planned

to do. Increased facilities for obtaining it will in turn stimulate a new demand, as it has been stimulated by the development of secondary education since 1902, and to meet that demand a further increase in the provision will be necessary. The end will be envisaged, it is to be hoped, with comparative clearness. But progress towards it will be experimental. And just as to-day in some areas ten per cent. of the children pass from primary to secondary schools, while in others the proportion is five or less, so in the future one authority will take fifty per cent. of them into the secondary schools while another takes only twenty-five. Expenditure will increase, but the increase will necessarily be gradual, and the additional cost at any moment will depend upon the additional provision which has been made.

With this caution, and with the omission of complications arising from future changes in the value of money, it is possible to offer an approximate estimate of the annual financial expenditure which our policy would involve. The additions to expenditure needed to carry it out will fall under three main heads : (i) the abolition of fees at grant-aided secondary schools; (ii) the development of an enlarged system of maintenance allowances; (iii) the provision of additional secondary school places, the main item in which will consist of the salaries of teachers. In the following paragraphs we deal with the annual cost of maintenance under each of these three heads. The estimate is necessarily very rough. But we have endeavoured to err, if anything, on the side of over-statement, and have not taken into account the economies which can be effected by a better co-ordination of primary and secondary education, though we believe them to be considerable.

The cost of abolishing fees can be stated with some accuracy. The income from fees was £1,100,245 in 1912-13, and was estimated by the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places as approximately £2,000,000 in 1920.[1] This figure, therefore, or slightly more, is the sum which it would cost the nation to free

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 16.

existing secondary schools without increasing the present school population.

The cost of establishing an adequate system of maintenance allowances cannot be stated with equal precision, since it will vary with changes in the cost of living and the level of earnings. In 1918-19 £253,149 was spent in England and Wales in providing maintenance allowances for 29,796 children in secondary schools, who formed 10.6 per cent. of all children in attendance. If, however, the secondary school population increases, a larger proportion of it, and not merely a larger absolute number, will require to be assisted by maintenance allowances. To show the probable cost under this heading, we put that proportion at an arbitrary figure of thirty per cent. of the pupils in attendance, which is approximately three times the present proportion. To provide maintenance allowances of the same average value (£8 9s.) for thirty per cent. of the children would cost the following sums for secondary school populations of different sizes :—

| England and Wales (excluding preparatory departments) | No. of children | Cost of providing maintenance allowance for 30 per cent. of children in attendance |
|---|---|---|
| Children in secondary schools in England, 1919-20 ..... | 280,336 | £710,649 |
| Children in secondary schools in England on scale of 10 per 1,000 of population ..... | 360,000 | £912,600 |
| Children in secondary schools on scale of 20 per 1,000 of population ..... | 720,000 | £1,810,200 |
| Children in secondary schools on scale of 75 per cent. of those leaving elementary schools ... | 2,250,000 | £5,703,750 |

Assuming therefore that (i) the proportion of children receiving maintenance allowances is trebled; (ii) that the children in secondary schools are increased from 8.7 per 1,000 to twenty per 1,000, the total cost of maintenance allowances would be £1,810,200.

So far, we have not been dealing with very large figures. To free secondary education and to establish maintenance allowances on the largest scale given in the above table would cost a good deal less than half one battleship. The provision of additional school accommodation for a greatly enlarged secondary school population is, of course, a much more serious matter. The annual maintenance cost of a secondary school place is, at present, £28 to £30. The total number of boys and girls between eleven and sixteen is approximately 3,000,000. Of these the children between eleven and fourteen would be attending primary schools if they were not attending secondary schools. In order, therefore, to ascertain the *net* addition to the national expenditure involved in providing secondary education for them, the cost of educating them in a primary school must, of course, be deducted. To that point we return later. In the following table we give the *gross* annual expenditure on secondary education on each of three assumptions :—

(*a*) That secondary school places are provided on the scale of ten per 1,000 of the population (instead of, as now, on that of 8.7 per 1,000);

(*b*) That they are provided on the scale of twenty per 1,000;

(*c*) That they are provided for seventy-five per cent. of the children leaving the primary schools.

GROSS COST OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AT THE RATE OF £30 PER SCHOOL PLACE

| —— | Number of children | Cost per child | Total gross cost per annum |
|---|---|---|---|
| On scale of 10 per 1,000 .. | 360,000 | £30 | £10,800,000 |
| On scale of 20 per 1,000 .. | 720,000 | £30 | £21,600,000 |
| On scale of 75 per cent. of children leaving the elementary schools ... | 2,250,000 | £30 | £67,500,000 |

In order to arrive at the net cost of secondary school places, it is necessary, as stated above, to deduct from the gross cost the cost of providing primary school places for children between the years eleven and fourteen. The annual maintenance cost of a primary school place is at present £8 15s. 9d.[2] According to the last report of the Board (October, 1920) out of 308,372 children in the secondary schools on the Grant List there were 60,505 children between ten and twelve, and 194,665 between twelve and sixteen. It is probable that about half the former and nearly three-quarters of the latter, had they not been attending secondary schools, would have been attending primary schools, approximately 150,000 children in all, or forty-eight per cent. of the total secondary school population. If it is assumed that, at any one time fifty per cent. of the children receiving secondary education would otherwise have been in primary schools, then the net cost will be shown by the following table :—

| —— | No. of children | Total gross cost of secondary education | Deduct cost of primary education (£8 16s. per head) for 50% of children | Total net cost per annum of secondary education |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| On scale of 10 per 1,000 ..... | 360,000 | £10,800,000 | £1,575,000 | £9,225,000 |
| On scale of 20 per 1,000 ..... | 720,000 | £21,500,000 | £3,150,000 | £18,350,000 |
| On scale of 75 per cent. of children leaving the elementary schools .. | 2,250,000 | £67,500,000 | £9,843,750 | £57,657,000 |

These figures considerably underestimate the deductions to be made, and therefore overestimate the net cost of providing additional secondary school places, because (i) a growing number of children, if not attending

[2] Seventh Report of Select Committee on National Expenditure (Dec. 1920). The Geddes Report (p. 109) puts it at £12 4s. 4d. (1921-2). If its figures are right the deduction to be made is, of course, greater and the net cost of our proposals correspondingly less.

secondary schools, will be, not in primary schools, but in the more expensive central and intermediate schools, (ii) as the secondary school population grows, the percentage of it drawn from primary schools will increase more than in proportion. Obviously, when seventy-five per cent. of the children in primary schools pass to secondary schools between the ages of eleven and twelve, the saving on account of primary education will be larger than that suggested above. The nearest estimate we can give would be to say that to provide secondary education on a scale of twenty per thousand of the population would probably cost something over £15,000,000 and under £18,000,000 a year, and that to provide it for seventy-five per cent. of the children leaving the primary schools would probably cost something over £50,000,000 and under £55,000,000 a year. For the reasons stated above, any such development can take place only gradually, as teachers are found and accommodation provided. If the former were effected in a period of five years, the addition to the annual expenditure made in each year would be approximately £3,000,000. If the latter were carried out over a period of ten years, the corresponding figure would be £5,000,000.

The total net cost of (*a*) a minimum programme, (*b*) a larger programme, based on our policy may, therefore, be set out in the following estimate :—

(A) Cost of Minimum Programme at end of Five Years

| | Cost per annum £ |
|---|---|
| Abolition of fees at grant-aided secondary schools . | 2,000,000 |
| Provision of school places on scale of twenty per 1,000 of population ..... | 18,350,000 |
| Provision of maintenance allowances for 30 per cent. of above number of children in grant-aided secondary schools ..... | 1,810,200 |
| Total..... | 22,160,200 |
| *Deduct* present cost of secondary education (1921-22) | 13,468,731 [3] |
| Additional cost ..... | £8,691,469 |

[3] This includes some items which are not strictly "secondary" education.

(B) Cost of Larger Programme at end of Ten Years

| | Cost per annum £ |
|---|---|
| Abolition of fees at grant-aided secondary schools . | 2,000,000 |
| Provision of school places on scale of 75 per cent. of children leaving the elementary schools ..... | 57,657,000 |
| Provision of maintenance allowances for 30 per cent. of above number of children in grant-aided secondary schools ..... | 5,703,750 |
| Total ..... | £65,360,750 |
| *Deduct* present cost of secondary education (1921–22) | 13,468,731 [4] |
| Additional cost ..... | £51,891,919 |

The additional cost of our minimum programme, therefore, would be less than that of one battleship. If the nation "ruined itself" by carrying out the larger programme, it would ultimately be spending on *all* kinds of education (higher and elementary together) about £50,000,000 *less* than it now spends (1921-22) on the army, navy, and air force.

## II

## CAN THE NATION "AFFORD" EDUCATION?

The comment of the reader who turns from his *Daily Mail* to glance for the first time at these figures will be simple: "Very nice, but the nation cannot afford it." At a meeting of the Federation of British Industries a little more than a year ago, held (for the sake of economy) in the Victoria Room of the Hotel Cecil, a certain Mr. Lincoln Chandler—apparently a waggon-builder—is reported, as became one of his profession, to have driven straight to the point, and like Jehu, the son of Nimshi, to have driven furiously. "It was time," he is stated to have said in a series of striking aphorisms quoted by *The Times* of December, 1920, "they came to plain speaking . . . we had embarked on schemes without which we had got on very well. There was the Education Act, the Health Bill, . . . and various

[4] See note [3] on previous page.

other schemes. He should like to send a strong message to Mr. Lloyd George that the whole of these schemes should be dropped and dropped at once." Few will question this sage's statement that he had "got on very well" without education. It is even possible that, were education more widely diffused, he and his kind might "get on" somewhat less well in the future. But the enlightenment even of the reluctant is a meritorious act; and, at the risk of boring our readers with commonplaces, we propose to set out shortly, without demanding fees or even engaging the Hotel Cecil, the relevant facts as to educational finance and expenditure, for the benefit of those who do not think that a nation is likely to "get on very well" without education, but who, nevertheless, are apprehensive that educational progress can be secured only at a cost which is beyond its financial resources.

It may be observed, in the first place, that no conclusion can be drawn as to the reasonableness or otherwise of educational expenditure until that expenditure is brought into relation with other items in the budgets both of the State and of private individuals. All magnitudes are relative—a fact which is common (if it is not profane to say so) to the cost both of education and of waggons. Whether a community can or cannot "afford" to arrange that its children shall grow up under conditions calculated to promote their physical and mental development depends not merely—to use the somewhat absurd phraseology favoured by a certain school of politicians—upon the "burden" which such an arrangement will entail, but upon the nature of the other objects to which expenditure is directed. Expenditure is neither more nor less onerous because the money is raised by rates and taxes, and spent by publicly chosen agents consisting of Local Education Authorities, than it is when it is incurred by private individuals upon their own account. Whether it is or is not a "burden" depends upon the relative importance of the objects to which it is assigned. Some things are desirable in themselves, but must be forgone because other things are more urgent. Other things are

futile in themselves, but are acquired because some people have a taste for futilities.

In this matter the only difference between the conduct of the individual citizen and that of a nation is that an individual who indulged his passion for futilities to the point of neglecting his primary social obligations—who turned his house into a fortress armed to the teeth in which he swilled alcohol in the drawing-room and kept his children on short rations in the coal hole—would become amenable to the law, while a whole community by doing the same may earn an agreeable reputation for being practical, high-spirited, and generally an imperial people entitled to sing "Take up the white man's burden, and dump it on the child" to the glory of God and to the exhilaration of all but a few anæmic sentimentalists. But patriotic tunes butter no parsnips. A writer who was at one time thought to know something about business remarked that "what is prudence in the conduct of every private family can hardly be folly in that of a great kingdom." And, if a parent who neglects his children is liable to criminal proceedings, the burden of proving that the same action is highly meritorious when done by several million parents, in the name of economy, appears to rest on those who support that paradox.

The innocent gentlemen like Sir Eric Geddes, Lord Inchcape, and the rest, who suppose that the "taxable capacity" of a nation is a fixed quantity, and that, if more than a certain proportion of the annual product is taken by the State, disaster must follow, *irrespective of the objects to which the State applies the money raised*, may be invited to console themselves by reading the Report on Credit, Currency, Finance, and Foreign Exchanges prepared by Section F of the British Association. To the question whether the "taxable capacity" of Great Britain has been "reached and passed" the answer given by the majority of economists appears to be that of Sir Josiah Stamp : "There can be no absolute answer, because *it depends upon the reasons for, or subjects upon, which the money is to be spent.*"

It is, in short, quite idle to discuss expenditure on education *except in connection with expenditure on other subjects*. Whether a nation can "afford" it or not, depends upon whether it is or is not more important than other purposes on which it is spending money. When, therefore, the Select Committee on National Expenditure deplored[5] the "alarming increase" in the cost of education, it was not merely mistaken (though, of course, it was mistaken) as to the financial facts, it showed a complete ignorance as to elementary financial principles. It relapsed, in fact, from the mendacious into the meaningless. To do it justice, it appears to have been equally at home in both.

The facts as to educational expenditure appear to be widely misunderstood, and the misunderstanding is not altogether the fault of the public. It is not merely that, in the nature of things, no complete estimate of the *total* educational expenditure of the country can be given, since there is no way of ascertaining the expenditure of private individuals. There is the further, and more surprising fact, that there appears to be no *one* official document in which *all* the facts as to public expenditure on education are brought together. The figures in Tables I.-III. below are reprinted, by kind permission of its authors, from the excellent Bulletin[6] on Education issued by Cambridge House. For an account of the sources used and for further information on several points of importance, the reader is referred to the Bulletin in question. For the use made of the figures, and for the conclusions drawn from them, we alone, of course, are responsible.

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[5] Seventh Report from the Select Committee on National Expenditure (December 21, 1920), p. xiv.

[6] *Cambridge House Bulletins, Education I*, to be obtained from Cambridge House, 131 Camberwell Road, London, S.E.

TABLE I[7]

TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURE (CENTRAL AND LOCAL) ON EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES

| Year | Amount | Percentage increase year to year | Percentage increase on 1913-14 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | | |
| 1913-14 ..... | 33,000,000 | — | — |
| 1918-19 ..... | 45,500,000 | 38 | 38 |
| 1920-21 (estimated) | 78,500,000 | 73 | 138 |
| 1921-22 (estimated) | 84,500,000 | 8 | 156 |

This increase is divided between elementary and higher education as follows :—

[7] The corresponding figures in the First Interim Report of the Committee on National Expenditure (p. 107)—the so-called "Geddes Report"—are as follows :—

| | £ | Percentage increase from year to year | Percentage increase on 1913-14 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1913-14 .... | 31,510,000 | — | — |
| 1918-19 .... | 42,110,000 | 33·6 | 33·6 |
| 1920-21 .... | 77,000,000 | 83·0 | 144·6 |
| 1921-22 .... | 84,580,000 | 9·7 | 168·0 |

The discrepancy between the figures given above and those of the Geddes Committee is small. According to the former, the increase in educational expenditure since 1913-14 is 156 per cent. ; according to the latter, 168 per cent. But it is sufficient to give point to what is said above on the urgent need that a complete and reliable report on the cost of education should be published annually by the Board, instead of this vital question being left to private investigators or to a committee of business men who are without practical knowledge of the subject matter. The explanation of the discrepancy is to be found in the fact that Table I above includes certain small receipts by Local Education Authorities from fees, the sale of books, &c., which the Geddes Report excludes, and in certain minor ambiguities in the educational statistics contained in the statistical abstract. It may be further observed that the figures published by the Geddes Committee disagree with those published in the Seventh Report of the Committee on National Expenditure (December, 1920).

TABLE II

| Year | Expenditure on elementary education (nearest 1,000) | Percentage increase on 1913-14 | Expenditure on higher education[8] | Percentage increase on 1913-14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | | £ | |
| 1913-14 | 26,314,000 | — | 5,248,000 | — |
| 1921-22 | 63,649,000 | 142 | 13,469,000 | 157 |

It is important to know the main items on which the increase has been incurred. Light is thrown upon that point by the following figures, which, however, relate only to elementary (not to higher) education.

TABLE III

| | 1913-14 | Percentage of total expenditure | 1921-22 | Percentage of total expenditure |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | | £ | |
| (1) Loan charges .... | 3,049,359 | 11·6 | 3,115,149 | 4·9 |
| (2) Other expenses of maintenance ... | 4,173,311 | 15·8 | 10,443,763 | 16·4 |
| (3) Administration .. | 1,293,042 | 4·9 | 2,974,541 | 4·8 |
| (4) Salaries of teachers | 16,415,827 | 62·4 | 43,296,355 | 68·0 |

Finally, it is perhaps worth setting out the proportion of the national expenditure devoted to education at different dates (similar figures for local expenditure are not available) :—

[8] The corresponding figures in the Geddes Report are :—

| | £ | Percentage increase on 1913-14 |
|---|---|---|
| 1913-14 ..... | 4,402,000 | — |
| 1921-22 ..... | 13,500,000 | 206·7 |

TABLE IV

| | All national services in the United Kingdom | Proportion of expenditure devoted to education in England and Wales |
|---|---|---|
| | £ | Per cent. |
| 1913-14 ..... | 197,492,969 | 7·28 |
| 1920-21 ..... | 1,195,428,000 | 4·0 |
| 1921-22 ..... | 1,039,728,000 | 4·90 |

From the above tables the following conclusions appear to emerge :—

(i) The *money* expenditure on public education (elementary and higher) is 156 per cent. (or, on Geddes' figures, 168 per cent.) higher in 1921-22 than it was in 1913-14.

(ii) The main cause of the increase of £51,000,000 (or, on Geddes' figures, £53,070,000) between those dates is the increase in the salaries of teachers, those of elementary teachers having increased by £26,880,528; those of secondary and other teachers by an uncertain, but substantial, figure. Minor causes of the increase are that repairs and building, postponed during the war, have been executed since the Armistice at high prices, and that the salaries of officials have risen. It must also be remembered—a fact sometimes apparently forgotten—that the child population has been growing since 1913-14 !

(iii) The proportion of the national expenditure devoted to education fell from 7.28 per cent. in 1913-14 to 4.9 per cent. in 1921-22.

These figures relate only to the *money* cost of education. Before, therefore, any precise significance can be attached to them, it is necessary to set them in relation to (1) expenditure on other objects, public and private ; (2) changes in the general price level, and, in particular, in the cost of living. This we attempt to do in the following table :—

TABLE V

| | 1912-13 (average) | 1913 | 1913-14 | 1914-15 | 1916-17 | 1919 | 1920-21 | 1921 | 1921-22 | Increase pr. cent. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | |
| Public education (central and local) | — | — | 33,000,000 | — | — | — | 78,500,000 | — | 84,500,000 | 156·0 (or 168) |
| Army, navy, & air force | — | — | 77,164,000 | — | — | — | 292,228,000 | — | 190,669,467 | 147·0 |
| Civil service and revenue department[9] | — | — | — | 87,913,000 | — | — | 609,181,953 | — | 460,900,585 | 424·0 |
| Total net expenditure on posts, telephones, and telegraphs | — | — | 14,179,000 | — | — | — | — | — | 67,165,000 | 178·0 |
| Receipts from entertainments duty[10] | — | — | — | — | 3,001,268 | — | 11,735,840 | — | Figures not yet available | 291·0 |
| Railways, charge per ton-mile[11] | — | — | 0·88d. (estd.) | — | — | — | 1·673d. (actual) | — | "Well over 2d." (estd.) | — |
| Expenditure on alcoholic liquor[12] | — | — | 166,600,000 | — | — | — | 470,000,000 | — | Figures not yet available | 183·0 |
| Pithead value of coal[13] | 118,000,000 | — | — | — | — | 314,060,000 | — | — | — | 166·0 |
| Income liable to income tax before deduction of allowances & reliefs[14] | — | 907,151,813 | — | — | — | — | — | 2,500,000,000 | — | 175·0 |
| Imperial Tobacco Company's profits | — | 3,354,476 | — | — | — | — | — | 6,925,005 | — | 107·0 |
| Cost of living[15] | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | 114·6 |

[9] White Paper No. 42.
[10] Finance accounts. The duty has been revised on several occasions. Obviously, however, the demand for "entertainments" is highly inelastic.
[11] *Economist*, December 3, 1921.
[12] Calendar year, not financial year. Figures supplied by United Kingdom Alliance.
[13] Coal Industry Commission and Report of Mines Department. It must be remembered, however, that the price of coal has fluctuated violently during the past three years.
[14] See *The Times*, February 8, 1922.
[15] Average for first ten months, 1921.

The first fact which these figures show is that the talk of the "alarming increase" in the cost of education is misleading. When account is taken of the devaluation of money, the increase in educational expenditure since 1913-14, though real, is hardly "alarming," especially when compared with the increased expenditure upon other objects. The degree of reliance to be based upon the widely advertised seventh report of the Select Committee on National Expenditure may be judged from the fact that this elementary point, which lies at the very threshold of the subject, was either unknown to, or deliberately suppressed by, that body of financial experts! The truth is that, measured in goods and services, which, of course, alone matter, the nation was actually applying a smaller sum to education in December, 1920—the time when the committee reported—than it did seven years ago. It is actually the case, though the reader will hardly believe it, that the same *suppressio veri* was repeated, without a word of caution or explanation, by the so-called Geddes Committee. Between 1913 and 1921 the income liable to income tax increased from £907,151,813 to £2,500,000,000. Would Sir Eric Geddes and Lord Inchcape hold that there had been an "enormous increase" in the real incomes of the wealthier classes since 1913? If not, why do they suggest that there has been an "enormous increase" in the real cost of education?

It will be observed, in the second place, that the nation spent in 1920-21 more than five times as much on drink as it spent on education—the drink bill, indeed, is enormous partly because the education bill is too small—and that the expenditure on armaments three years after the termination of hostilities is considerably more than twice that on education. The disproportion is so immense that it would still remain large even if the proposals made in this pamphlet were carried out. In the event of effect being given to the "minimum programme" set out above, and of no other changes in expenditure taking place, the nation would still be spending almost

twice as much on the armed forces as on education. If the larger programme were realised, its expenditure on the former would still exceed its expenditure on the latter by over £50,000,000 a year, or considerably more than the total sum spent on the army in 1913-14!

In face of facts of this order it is quite idle for Select Committees, "business men," or any one else to deplore "the alarming increase in the cost of education," because, in reality, when account is taken of the devaluation of money, no very great increase has taken place, and, if it had, it would not be alarming, since (as the figures show) the nation can meet it by cutting down some of the extravagances both of its government and of its individual members. Like the revolutionary Tribunal which told Lavoisier that "the Republic has no need of chemists," Lord Inchcape may see in education nothing but economically unproductive expenditure. It is time, however, that the business classes and their servants in the Cabinet and in Parliament stopped mistaking their personal prejudices for economic facts. By far the largest item in the increase in the money expenditure upon education consists of the advance in teachers' salaries. If a man's heart leaps up at the thought of employing soldiers, sailors, and publicans, and sinks to his boots at the thought of employing teachers, he is entitled to his opinion. One cannot argue with the choice of a soul, and if he likes that kind of thing then that is the kind of thing he likes. But his private sentiments, even when he sits on a Select Committee or in the Cabinet, have no more relevance to economic realities than have those of any other old gentleman who thinks that the world is coming to an end because he has to pay more for his cigars. A certain section—happily for the nation, not the most representative section—of the English governing classes have always thought that the most desirable way of saving money was to reduce the height, weight, vitality, and intelligence of the children of people poorer than themselves, on the ground, presumably, that such *canaille* can hardly be expected to take the same

interest in life as their own. But not every one is an economist who chooses to make speeches or issue reports about "economy," and when these respectable cannibals propose to "economise" on education, they provoke the retort that it would be considerably more economical for the nation to economise on *them*.

We do not, therefore, ask whether there is not a certain absurdity in applying the rigours of the economic calculus to boys and girls of fourteen, whether the policy of "making the children pay for the war" is quite the most appropriate tribute to the fathers who fell in it, whether, if the ship is really sinking, "women and children last" is the motto by which the British Empire desires to be remembered. The paladins who are leading the attack on the schools appeal to economic facts, and to economic facts they shall go. The total sum spent on higher education in 1913-14 was slightly less than the sum paid to rather less than 4,000 owners of mineral royalties, which (in other connections) we are informed is a bagatelle, and in 1921-2 is almost exactly equal to the average annual profits of the coal industry for the five years 1909-13. The salaries of 16,000 teachers for continuation schools under the Act of 1918, at an average of £300 a year, would have been £4,800,000, or slightly less than the profits (before deductions for income tax and excess profits duty) made in a single year—1919—by a single firm—Coats' Combine—more than £2,000,000 less than the profits—£6,925,005—made in 1921 by the Imperial Tobacco Company, and approximately £2,000,000 less than the expenditure of the Government on its farcical military preparations for cowing the miners last summer, when the cutting down of education, because "the nation could not afford it," had already begun. If the Education Act of 1918 had been brought into operation with the greatest possible speed, the total additional expenditure on education by 1924 would probably have been something approaching £10,000,000, or rather more than the cost of one battleship. If the larger of the two programmes outlined above were to be developed steadily for the next decade,

the additional annual expenditure at the end of it would be something less than half what has been spent since the Armistice in financing and arming military adventurers against Russia, not to mention Mesopotamia and Ireland.

## III
## THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

So far, then, as the facts of the financial situation are concerned, the attack on educational expenditure breaks down in the very court to which it appeals. The nation is not "crushed by educational expenditure." It has not "reached the limit of what it can afford." It is not true that "no money is available for educational improvements." On the contrary, money which ought to be spent on education is being thrown away with both hands on extravagances, both private and public. The critics of education may be admirable, if somewhat austere, moralists. But as financiers they do not know the elements of their subject. If the community is induced, with the object of effecting what are called (though not by economists) "economies," to make another raid on the health and intelligence of its children, it must not lay the flattering unction to its soul that it does so under the stress of financial necessity. Whatever the causes of the financial burden which it bears, they are certainly not to be found in excessive expenditure on education.

In reality, of course, neither is it a mere objection to increased expenditure on education which is the impelling cause behind the attack upon it, nor is it a mere exposure of the hollowness of that objection which will enable the attack to be defeated. The interests which are resisting educational progress to-day, on the ground that "we cannot afford it after the war," are precisely the same as those which resisted it before the war began. Their motives are various : partly a fear that more education will mean less cheap juvenile labour, partly the idea that, if they are better educated, working-class children will forget their place and be less fitted, in the elegant

words of the Federation of British Industries, for "the employments which they eventually enter," partly a dislike of any movement which is likely to diminish economic and social inequalities, partly mere ignorance, which is not altogether their own fault, of what education is and means, and a doubt whether, after all, it is not a useless luxury invented by faddists for the advantage of teachers and administrators.

With those who are attacking education because it threatens their personal profit or social position it is not necessary to argue. The larger number who are doubtful whether it is "worth it" may be invited to consider both the practice of other countries and the experience of their own. It is improbable, to put it mildly, that the whole civilised world is out of step except themselves. Thanks to the war and the peace, comparisons based on money expenditure are almost meaningless. But if the ingenuous journalists who denounce education as a "fad" will look at our Allies, they will find that the expenditure of France on education has increased since 1913 to a considerably greater extent than has that of this country. "In America," stated the United States Commissioner of Education in 1920, "it is now generally held that expenditure for education must be doubled at least before the opportunities for education can in any adequate measure meet the needs of the people and the demands of public opinion."[16] The appropriations in 1920 were approximately 1,000,000,000 dollars or, roughly £200,000,000 to £250,000,000. If these were doubled, the expenditure would be between £400,000,000 and £500,000,000; and it must be remembered that even in 1913 the public secondary schools in America were almost universally free, that the education given in the State Universities was often virtually free, and that the proportion of children passing from the primary schools to both was far higher than in England. What precisely is happening in Germany cannot be stated in figures. But it is

[16] The *Teachers' World*, October 20, 1921.

known that since the war there has been in many parts of the country an educational revival, and that, amid economic difficulties far exceeding those of this country, a determined effort is being made to rebuild by means of education the resources of the nation.[17]

Such facts should remind us that talk about the cost of education, which ignores the effect of it on character and intelligence and physical well-being, on the output of industry and the amenity of social life, is as rational as a discussion of one side of a balance sheet without reference to the other. When it is stated that "taxation is crushing industry" what actually is supposed to occur? The phrase appears to be used in several different senses. But the principal suggestions which it is intended to convey seem to be two. The first is that taxation diminishes the incentive to effort, by diminishing the reward which effort receives. The second is that the State collects in taxes and spends on current account wealth which, if left in the hands of the taxpayer, would have been saved and used as capital, with the result either that the material equipment of industry is not improved as quickly as is desirable, or that, in extreme cases, it actually runs down. "The capital," to quote Mr. McKenna,[18] "which the keen, active, enterprising man could use to the utmost advantage in developing trade, is taken from him, and spent unproductively on one of the manifold activities of the State."

Now, it is true, of course, that both these results are possibilities, and that both have actually occurred in the past, though probably not (except in so far as the war is concerned) in the recent past. But it is evident also that the appearance of these disastrous consequences depends on the presence of a factor which most of the popular complaints of "taxation crushing industry" overlook or do not mention. It is conditional on the money raised

[17] See *The Observer*, January 29, 1922: "Far from wishing to economise on education, all political parties are encouraging it to the utmost."

[18] *The Times*, January 28, 1922.

by taxation being spent, as Mr. McKenna says, "unproductively"—on its being used by the State in such a way as not to increase the resources of the nation or to add to its capacity for economic effort. Whether taxation is "crushing" or not cannot, therefore, be decided merely by pointing to the sums which are raised. It is equally essential to consider the way in which, when raised, they are spent. No serious financier has ever supposed that the effect on industry of spending £100,000,000 on armaments is the same as that of spending £100,000,000 in paying off part of the national debt. No one ought to suppose that it is the same as that of spending £100,000,000 on education or public health. In the first case the capacity to produce goods and services (other than armaments) is diminished : in the second case that capacity is increased. The truth is that ill-health and ignorance are an economic burden which no society can afford to carry once it has learned how to lighten it. Every one of the 1,000,000 children in the primary schools suffering from physical ailments whose health is impaired through failure to provide suitable and early treatment for it, or whose mental development is arrested because it is prematurely snatched from school, or whose *morale* is lowered during the critical years of adolescence by alternate overwork and unemployment, represents not an "economy" but the most unintelligent, as well as the most cruel, of extravagances. It is possible for the *personnel* as well as the material equipment of industry to be undercapitalised, and a nation which has the courage to invest generously in its children "saves," in the strictest economic sense, more "capital" than the most parsimonious community which ever lived with its eyes on the Stock Exchange.

"Never will I believe," said Macaulay in 1846, "that what makes a population stronger and healthier and wiser and better can ultimately make it poorer. . . . If ever we are forced to yield the foremost place among commercial nations, we shall yield it to some nation preeminently vigorous in body and mind." His words were

spoken in defence of factory legislation, which was opposed by industrial interests on somewhat the same grounds as education is opposed to-day. But they are equally applicable to the questions of educational policy which are the subject of this memorandum. A nation can no more impoverish itself by cultivating the intelligence of its children than by developing any other of the resources with which nature has endowed it. From a purely economic standpoint the most important part of the capital of a country consists of human beings. Wealth applied to improving their physical and intellectual attainments is the most remunerative of all investments, since it adds to that particular type of productive power on which the ability to use all other natural advantages, and to overcome natural disadvantages, ultimately depends. In the partnership "between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born," which forms the life of society, almost the most vital link is the provision which each generation makes for posterity by means of education.

For Great Britain, even on purely economic grounds, the issue is peculiarly crucial. Fifty years ago, in warning his fellow countrymen of the future exhaustion of the coal resources on which for a century and a half the wealth of this country has rested, Jevons pleaded for "a general system of education which may effect for the future generation what is hopeless for this present generation. . . . At present it may almost be said to be profitable to breed little slaves."[19] Since Jevons wrote, there have been three great Education Acts and a host of minor measures. But the nation is still far from having made provision for the full development of the most important of its national resources—the health and the intelligence of its children. Yet the effect of investing money in them will endure when other sources of wealth have begun to fail.

[19] Jevons, "The Coal Question," preface to second edition. See also Money, "The Nation's Wealth."

It is one of the tragedies of English social history that in the period of swiftly increasing returns between 1850 and 1890, when wealth was growing by leaps and bounds and taxation was hardly felt, the opportunity of creating a really effective educational system was missed, because riches came so easily that education seemed unimportant. What then could have been done without any considerable economic effort requires to-day a larger measure of foresight and self-discipline. But the need for it is even more urgent. The course of wisdom for Great Britain, which owes its modern economic development largely to a single, and a wasting, asset, and which, even before the war, had lost some of the adventitious facilities for industrial leadership which it possessed almost up to the end of the nineteenth century, would be to use a large part of the wealth of a coal age which will one day draw to a close to establish the most comprehensive system of education that educational science can suggest. On this matter, at any rate, the economists speak with no uncertain voice. Professor Bowley, who will not be suspected of under-estimating the importance of economic considerations, pleads for "better education" as one way of increasing the output of wealth, by securing "a much fuller use of the latent abilities of the race than hitherto has been possible."[20] Professor Marshall, in an oft quoted passage, after stating that "perhaps £100,000,000 annually are spent even by the working class, and £400,000,000 by the rest of the population of England in ways that do little or nothing towards making life nobler or truly happier," urges that "it is the young whose faculties are of the highest importance both to the moralist and the economist. *The most imperative duty of this generation is to provide for the young the best education for the work they have to do as producers and as men and women, together with long continued freedom from mechanical toil and abundant leisure for school.*"[21]

[20] Bowley, "The Division of the Product of Industry," p. 57.

[21] "Principles," pp. 786-7.

Let the reader reflect on the present life of hundreds of thousands of boys and girls, on the prevalence of physical ailments among them, on their premature overwork, on their hurried and truncated schooling, on the waste of capacity caused by the failure to make smooth the way to higher education—let him consider that it is on these boys and girls, on their energy and foresight, their individual ability and their capacity for social co-operation, that the prosperity of the nation in fifteen years will depend—and he will not think it extravagant to suggest that they should be educated up to sixteen under the most favourable conditions that the progress of educational science can offer. The generation which is now mature has not left a pleasant world to its successors. It can at least put into their hands the tools with which to rebuild the ruins that surround them.

# Appendices

## APPENDIX—TABLE I

A very rough indication of the inequality of educational opportunity as between different areas is given by this table, which should be read in connection with Table III. It is calculated from Tables B and D, Appendix I, of the Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places, and shows the proportion which applicants for admission to secondary schools, who were refused admission at the beginning of 1919-20, bear to the number of children between ten and eleven in the elementary schools. It should be noted that the variations in the percentage of Column (6) to Column (1) in different areas represent differences of demand as well as differences of supply. On the other hand, experience suggests that the supply of secondary education affects the demand for it.

| —— | (1) No. of boys and girls in public elementary schools on January 31, 1919, between the ages of ten and eleven | (2) No. of applicants for admission as fee-paying pupils to grant-aided secondary schools excluded at beginning of 1919-20 for want of accommodation | (3) Ratio of (2) to (1) per 1,000 | (4) No. of applicants for admission to these schools as free placers whom school authorities would have been willing to accept had free places been available | (5) Ratio of (4) to (1) per 1,000 | (6) Total of (2) and (4) | Ratio of (6) to (1) per 1,000 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 34,569 | 506 | 14 | 489 | 14 | 995 | 28 |
| County boroughs | 19,439 | 218 | 11 | 580 | 29 | 798 | 41 |
| Total ..... | 54,008 | 724 | 13 | 1,069 | 19 | 1,793 | 33 |
| N.E. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 36,684 | 77 | 2 | 60 | 1 | 137 | 3 |
| County boroughs | 40,767 | 501 | 12 | 567 | 13 | 1,068 | 26 |
| Total ..... | 77,451 | 578 | 7 | 627 | 8 | 1,205 | 15 |
| N.W. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 41,597 | 225 | 5 | 853 | 20 | 1,078 | 25 |
| County boroughs | 67,660 | 680 | 10 | 969 | 14 | 1,649 | 24 |
| Total ..... | 109,257 | 905 | 8 | 1,822 | 16 | 2,727 | 24 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W.C. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 42,428 | 367 | 8 | 344 | 8 | 711 | 16 |
| County boroughs | 44,861 | 1,019 | 22 | 614 | 13 | 1,633 | 36 |
| Total ..... | 87,289 | 1,386 | 15 | 958 | 10 | 2,344 | 26 |
| E.C. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 63,369 | 790 | 12 | 754 | 11 | 1,544 | 24 |
| County boroughs | 13,046 | 278 | 21 | 71 | 5 | 349 | 26 |
| Total ..... | 76,415 | 1,068 | 13 | 825 | 10 | 1,893 | 24 |
| E. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 39,983 | 339 | 8 | 407 | 10 | 746 | 18 |
| County boroughs | 18,127 | 605 | 33 | 370 | 20 | 975 | 53 |
| Total ..... | 58,110 | 944 | 16 | 777 | 13 | 1,721 | 29 |
| S.E. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 42,516 | 635 | 14 | 1,642 | 38 | 2,277 | 53 |
| County boroughs | 14,521 | 493 | 33 | 166 | 11 | 659 | 45 |
| Total ..... | 57,037 | 1,128 | 19 | 1,808 | 31 | 2,936 | 51 |
| S.W. Division :— | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 26,528 | 345 | 13 | 837 | 31 | 1,182 | 44 |
| County boroughs | 5,391 | 282 | 52 | 57 | 10 | 339 | 62 |
| Total ..... | 31,919 | 627 | 19 | 894 | 28 | 1,521 | 47 |
| London ..... | 76,340 | 1,911 | 25 | — | — | — | — |

## APPENDIX—TABLE II

(From Report of the Departmental Committee on Scholarships and Free Places (Cmd. 368), App. I, Table B)

| | Number of boys and girls January 31, 1919, between the ages of 10 and 11 in public elementary schools | | | Number of boys and girls admitted to grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar schools during 1918-19 | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | From public elementary schools holding free places | | | Others, if any, exempt from fees | | | Fee-paying pupils from public elementary schools | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| ENGLAND | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total | Boys | Girls | Total |
| Counties ..... | 203,596 | 200,418 | 404,014 | 7,096 | 6,210 | 13,306 | 284 | 194 | 478 | 12,857 | 9,005 | 21,862 |
| County boroughs | 112,575 | 111,237 | 223,812 | 4,787 | 4,206 | 8,993 | 135 | 165 | 300 | 8,566 | 6,161 | 14,727 |
| Total ..... | 316,171 | 311,655 | 627,826 | 11,883 | 10,416 | 22,299 | 419 | 359 | 778 | 21,423 | 15,166 | 36,589 |
| WALES | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 21,581 | 21,219 | 42,800 | 1,217 | 1,320 | 2,537 | 12 | 25 | 37 | 1,835 | 1,865 | 3,700 |
| County boroughs | 5,341 | 5,111 | 10,452 | 328 | 294 | 622 | 5 | 6 | 11 | 399 | 260 | 659 |
| Total ..... | 26,922 | 26,330 | 53,252 | 1,545 | 1,614 | 3,159 | 17 | 31 | 48 | 2,234 | 2,125 | 4,359 |

| | Number of boys and girls admitted to grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar schools during 1918-19 | | | | | | Percentage of admissions of children *from public elementary schools* into grant-earning secondary schools, junior technical institutes, and similar schools to number in p.e. schools between 10 and 11 | Percentage of *total* admissions to grant-aided secondary schools, junior technical schools, and similar schools to numbers in p.e. schools between 10 and 11 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Fee-paying pupils not from public elementary schools | | | Total | | | | |
| | 13 Boys | 14 Girls | 15 Total | 16 Boys | 17 Girls | 18 Total | 19 | 20 |
| ENGLAND | | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 9,243 | 8,714 | 17,957 | 29,480 | 24,123 | 53,603 | 8·8 | 13·3 |
| County boroughs | 4,330 | 5,280 | 9,610 | 17,819 | 15,782 | 33,601 | 10·7 | 15·0 |
| Total | 13,573 | 13,994 | 27,567 | 47,299 | 39,905 | 87,204 | 9·5 | 13·9 |
| WALES | | | | | | | | |
| Counties ..... | 337 | 350 | 687 | 3,401 | 3,560 | 6,961 | 14·6 | 16·3 |
| County boroughs | 70 | 103 | 173 | 802 | 663 | 1,465 | 12·3 | 14·0 |
| Total ..... | 407 | 453 | 860 | 4,203 | 4,223 | 8,426 | 14·4 | 15·8 |

## APPENDIX—TABLE III

In the following table an attempt is made to show the varying relation between the elementary and secondary school populations (a) in certain counties and county boroughs of England, (b) in the United States. The source used for (a) is the schemes of the local authorities concerned, for (b) Sandiford, "Comparative Education," page 61.

The figures relating to England are not satisfactory, and we present them only with great hesitation. They are not always strictly comparable; some authorities, for example, give figures of the children on the registers of public elementary schools, others of average attendance; some include in the secondary school population schools recognised, but not aided, by the local authority, others include only schools aided or maintained; some appear to have excluded from their totals children resident outside the area in which they attend school, others do not. For these and other reasons they must be regarded as, at best, an approximation. They may be of some small service pending the publication of more exact comparative statistics.

(a)

Figures indicating the relation between the elementary and secondary school population in certain counties and county boroughs of England and Wales

| — | (i) Number of children in public elementary schools | (ii) Number of children in secondary schools | (iii) No. of children in secondary schools per 1,000 of children in public elementary schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| COUNTIES— | | | |
| Cornwall ..... | 41,000 | 2,661 | 64·9 |
| Devon ..... | 49,387 | 2,764 | 55·9 |
| Durham ..... | 150,658 | 5,580 | 37·3 |
| Essex ..... | 63,478 | 7,136 | 112·4 |
| Hunts ..... | 8,379 | 514 | 60·6 |
| Kent ..... | | | |
| Staffordshire .. | 82,177 | 4,132 | 40·2 |
| COUNTY BOROUGHS— | | | |
| Birmingham .. | 148,676 | 6,055 | 40·7 |
| Bradford ..... | 34,833 | 3,500 | 100·5 |
| Croydon ..... | 25,819 | 2,904 | 112·4 |
| Leeds ..... | 73,269 | 5,605 | 76·4 |
| Liverpool ..... | 138,823 | 7,039 | 50·7 |
| Rochdale ..... | 13,550 | 370 | 27·3 |
| Stockport .... | 18,283 | 1,050 | 55·6 |
| Stoke-on-Trent. | 44,326 | 1,257 | 28·3 |

(b)

UNITED STATES

Pupils in high schools in various States in 1910 for each 1,000 in elementary schools

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N.H. | 118 | Kansas | 79 | Va. | 44 |
| Cal. | 114 | Mich. | 77 | Tenn. | 40 |
| Mass. | 110 | Conn. | 76 | Wyo. | 36 |
| Wash. | 101 | Minn. | 74 | N.Mex. | 35 |
| Ore. | 95 | Wis. | 73 | Fla. | 31 |
| Ind. | 95 | Ill. | 69 | Ga. | 30 |
| Maine | 93 | N.J. | 62 | Ky. | 30 |
| Vt. | 90 | Pa. | 58 | N.C. | 29 |
| Utah | 90 | Mo. | 58 | Ala. | 26 |
| Iowa | 89 | S.D. | 58 | La. | 26 |
| R.I. | 84 | Del. | 56 | Okla. | 25 |
| Colo. | 84 | Mont. | 51 | Ariz. | 25 |
| Nevada | 84 | Md. | 47 | S.C. | 24 |
| Neb. | 82 | Texas | 46 | Miss. | 24 |
| New York | 82 | Idaho | 45 | Ark. | 23 |
| Ohio | 81 | N.D. | 44 | W.Va. | 22 |

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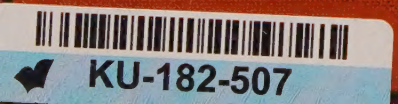
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